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IT MAY VERY WELL BE that Mr. Moley's resignation as Assistant Secretary of State really was made mainly for the purpose of assuming the editorship of the new national weekly to be published by Vincent Astor. The editorship of the weekly apparently carries with it a salary substantially larger than Mr. Moley was receiving in his official position, and if the new organ is generally regarded as offering a quasi-official reflection of the Administration's views, it may continue to give Mr. Moley great influence. In spite of these considerations, however, Washington will probably persist in seeing the resignation as the logical outcome of the conflict between Mr. Moley and Mr. Hull at London. Mr. Moley, officially subordinate to Mr. Hull, was unofficially, because of his close friendship with the President, Mr. Hull's superior in influence. This anomalous position was in itself almost certain to prove embarrassing to both men even if their political and economic views had been substantially the same, and even if they could otherwise have got along together personally. But Mr. Hull's pronouncements in favor of international cooperation were being constantly repudiated by Mr. Moley's in favor of economic nationalism, and this conflict came to a head, of course, at the London conference. The President's curt rejection of the currency-stabilization plan agreed to by Mr. Moley was his first public repudiation of the latter's advice, and the quick transfer of the professor to an investigation of racketeering shortly after that seemed merely another step in rejecting him as an economic adviser, but whether his resignation will mean that Mr. Roosevelt will once more turn to policies of international cooperation rather than of "intranationalism" it is too early to say.

THE AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURERS succeeded where the steel industry failed in inserting into their code a statement which protects the open shop against the forays of organized labor. The phraseology is innocent, and ostensibly impartial. It is merely stated that "employers in this industry may exercise their right to select, retain, or advance employees on the basis of individual merit without regard to their membership or non-membership in any organization." But labor knows quite as well as the automobile manufacturers that the privilege of hiring, firing, and promoting on the basis of "individual merit" is the historic weapon with which American employers have broken up union after union in this country. It may be argued that since labor unions have never been able of their own efforts permanently to organize workers in the automobile trades they should not now be given a legal advantage over the employers. But this argument overlooks the power of the industry—highly organized and thoroughly familiar with American industrial history—which has exerted every pressure within its command to keep unions out. In Detroit, particularly, this power has been backed by a press which has advertised the open shop as Detroit's greatest claim to fame. That the government should now, in however innocent terms, give its blessing to that claim is a blow to organized labor not only in Detroit but wherever it is not already strongly intrenched. It will tend to keep the unorganized out of unions, and, unfortunately, that term covers the great majority of American workers. The government has denied that the statement in the automobile code is to be regarded as a precedent, but precedents cannot be so easily ruled out.

GROVER WHALEN has invented a new crime. Its name is "disorderly interference with the NRA" and to commit it consists in picketing an NRA employer. This is not a joke. Mr. Whalen, who is in charge of the NRA drive in New York City, is seriously planning to prosecute a picket on the charge quoted above, and to attempt to prove in court that the right to carry on even orderly picketing has been suspended by the NRA program. His contention that it has is ardently sustained by Chief Inspector O'Brien of the New York police force, who unhesitatingly and unblushingly asserts that "any interference with the recovery act" is "in the nature of a conspiracy against the United States." Without wishing to exaggerate the importance of these manifestations of local ebullience we believe that they demonstrate beyond any argument the likelihood that absurd and abusive

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methods will be employed under what Heywood Broun has called "the stress of hoopla." As usual, repressive measures are first threatened against the extreme left-wing opposition. So far *The Nation* has not been had up in court for questioning the methods or rulings of the NRA. But when officials begin inventing new offenses and talking about conspiracy, the mildest of us had better look to our liberties. Heywood Broun objects to *The Nation's* insistence upon the value of criticism even in time of dire national recovery. "There is nothing in the law," he says, "which even dimly suggests that anybody in the government has the right to go down to 20 Vesey Street and confiscate *The Nation's* putty blower." You wait, Heywood; after Grover Whalen has arrested all the anti-NRA pickets, he may get round to us bourgeois liberals, even those who, like you and us, support the general aims of the Recovery Administration. The charge will probably be "editorial trifling with that bird." Meanwhile, we shall continue to support the right of workers to strike and picket against low wages and bad conditions even when they occur under the wings of the eagle.

IT IS DIFFICULT at this time to gauge the precise importance of the international agreement on wheat control reached at London. Its reception by the world's markets was cool and guarded. On the day following the agreement wheat rose in price about 2 or 3 per cent, but it is quite possible that so moderate a rise might have occurred even if there had been no conference. At the moment what seems most cheerful and most important is the fact that more than twenty nations have been able to reach any agreement at all. If this means that at last a step has been taken away from economic nationalism and toward international cooperation, it would be gratifying not only for itself but as an omen. But even a brief consideration of the text of the agreement and of the obstacles still in the way compels one to take an attitude as guarded as that of the markets. The agreement has still to be ratified by the legislatures of all the nations involved, and this obstacle alone may prove insuperable. The Russian delegates have already refused to say by how much they would be willing to limit their exports. The agreement as it stands fixes a general export maximum for all exporting countries for the current crop year—August 1, 1933, to July 31, 1934—of 560,000,000 bushels, and in the following crop year exports are to be limited "to maximum figures 15 per cent less in the case of each country than the average turnout on average acreage sown during this period of 1931-33, inclusive, after deducting the normal domestic requirements." The Balkan countries agree to restrict their exports of wheat both in the current and in the next crop year to 50,000,000 bushels a year. The importing countries agree not to encourage the extension of wheat acreage, and even to relax import quota restrictions and reduce wheat tariffs if the price of wheat for four months running averages higher than 63.08 cents in gold a bushel—about 90 cents at current exchange rates.

THIS AGREEMENT leaves innumerable loopholes. The importing countries promise, in effect, to do nothing at all to help wheat until wheat has first shown its ability to help itself. If the price falls, so that conditions become worse, the importing countries will help to prolong that situation by retaining their tariffs and quotas. But even if the price rises, the importing countries have promised nothing very specific. An importing country could technically fulfil its promise merely by reducing, say, a tariff of 100 per cent to one of 99 per cent. It has, in addition, the saving provision that "the degree of protection adopted should be primarily dependent upon domestic conditions within each country"—which means, in effect, that each country can do what it likes. On the side of the exporting countries, it is still not clear what is to become of the wheat not exported. Is it to pile up for two years so that it can smother the market at the end of that time? If there is to be reduced production, how is that to be administered and enforced? The problem is baffling enough within a single country, and the difficulties increase enormously as between rival countries.

THE REMOVAL from the Chicago Board of Trade of the restrictions aimed at setting a minimum price for wheat marks the end, we hope, of a foolish policy. That policy was not justified either by general considerations or by the special situation that had developed. In four months wheat had registered the almost unparalleled rise in such a period of 150 per cent—ten times as great as the advance in the general average of commodity prices—and then had broken 30 per cent. The Administration seemed to regard the rise as normal and the break as the result of speculative manipulation, whereas a sharp break was only to be expected after so excessive an advance. Apart from these special considerations, it is obvious that the fixing of arbitrary minimum prices can in the long run only be harmful. If the prices fixed by the forces of supply and demand are higher than the official minimum prices, then the latter are unnecessary; but if market prices would otherwise have been lower, then the only effect of the minimum prices must be either to drive trading to other markets or to bring it practically to a standstill, so that sellers cannot get rid of their supply at the minimums fixed or at any other figure. Neither the wheat growers nor any other class of producers can be helped by this means. Such criticism does not apply to the regulations governing the maximum fluctuations of wheat and other grains in any one trading day. These can do very little harm, for they can bring trading to a standstill only for a day or two; whereas, on the other hand, they may to some extent check purely speculative drives. The new regulations raising the margins necessary on any wheat held in excess of 6,000,000 bales are a sound means of reducing excessive speculation by individuals and should do much to protect the market against forced liquidation.

UNDER COVER of the public excitement attending the NRA campaign the State Department is slipping rapidly back into its old ways. The permanent officials of the department are clearly bent on resurrecting the dollar diplomacy of Philander C. Knox and Frank B. Kellogg. Nor does the Administration seem to be greatly concerned. The appointment of Jefferson Caffery as Ambassador to Cuba, discussed in these columns last week, is a case in point. No less ominous is the British-American ultimatum delivered to Liberia on August 25. In this note the State Department and the British Foreign Office bluntly told Liberia that it must accept the infamous League "plan of assistance" without further delay. It must also release certain unidentified political prisoners. Who these prisoners may be we can only guess.

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Presumably they are Liberian politicians who have sided with the Firestone interests. The penalty to be meted out to Liberia if it refuses to yield is only hinted at in the British-American note. Yet there can be no doubt about the nature of this penalty. Among them the Firestone interests, the bankers, and the diplomats can quickly reduce Liberia to utter destitution. They need only turn the screws a little tighter, for the Firestone people, with the help of the State Department, have already brought the African republic to the verge of bankruptcy. Naturally the ultimatum was delivered in secrecy. The State Department had difficulty in concealing its consternation when it learned that the news of the ultimatum had reached friends of Liberia in this country.

ONCE MORE the British government has released Gandhi from Yerovda jail in order to avoid the consequences of his death in prison. At the time of his release, which was unconditional, Gandhi was in the eighth day of a "fast unto death" which he undertook when the government refused to allow him the privileges he thought necessary for his work for the untouchables. So the contest between Gandhi and the British raj goes on. And the government, so far, has made all of the concessions. It will make a great many more if necessary rather than let Gandhi die in its custody. As we write, he has made no announcement of his future plans. Some correspondents have seized upon his statement that he will seek peace more eagerly than imprisonment as an indication that he will abandon civil disobedience. In a world of human fallibility it is not surprising that the correspondents, like the British government, have never found it quite possible to believe, in spite of endless lessons, that Gandhi does not compromise, but it is very probable that the accustomed round will shortly begin again and that Gandhi will be in prison once more after another attempt at civil disobedience.

THE PENNSYLVANIA SWEATSHOP received a good deal of publicity in May when Mrs. Gifford Pinchot joined a "children's strike" and a joint legislative committee was appointed to investigate the charges of starvation wages, intolerable working conditions, and enforced immorality made against the employers by fifteen- and sixteen-year-old girls and boys. The testimony before the committee, particularly the tales of immorality, were given much space in the daily press which knows news when it sees it. But the press has a habit of leaving the denouement of some of its best stories to the imagination of its readers, and the end of the sweatshop tale was told either very quietly or not at all. From a correspondent we learn that at the conclusion of the investigation the majority of the committee decided to do exactly nothing. "Any hasty actions or recommendations for minimum-wage laws at the present time," said State Senator G. Mason Owlett, who was chairman, "might conflict with the smooth functioning of the NIRA." The mill owners, needless to say, were quick to agree. In fact, they had expressed the same opinion shortly before, when Franklin Spencer Edmonds, appearing as an attorney for numerous owners at the final hearing, urged that the committee adjourn for six months without taking any action or making any recommendations. "In that time some of these things will work themselves out," he said.

CHAIRMAN OWLETT not only heartily agreed that it would be best not to "muddy the waters" but went on to say with an impartiality that might well become a mill owner that sweatshops represent merely "abnormal conditions existing in some industries." His final claim to impartiality is to be found in his additional remark that "it is unfair to suppose that the industrial establishment, generally speaking, is other than wholesome and decent." This remark was uttered following a month of hearings at which children testified that they had received wages of eighteen cents to three dollars for a week of fifty to seventy hours; and that girls had been forced to accept the attentions of their employers or lose their miserable jobs. So far the only result of the "children's strike" and its widespread publicity is the arrest of one mill owner on charges of violating the Mann Act. There is, however, one bright note to be recorded. An enlightened minority of the committee, including Mrs. Pinchot, Judge Horace Stern, and Clarence J. Moser, will probably issue a report of their own which will spare neither the industrial establishment nor the mill owners. And an even brighter spot is visible on the Pennsylvania labor horizon. It is the figure of Charlotte Carr, former colleague of Frances Perkins, who has recently been appointed Secretary of Labor for Pennsylvania. The sweatshops are likely to find her a more vigorous opponent even than the Blue Eagle of the NRA.

# Liquor Control

ON the assumption that the result of the vote in Washington—which will be known before this issue of *The Nation* reaches its readers—will follow that in Texas, every one of the twenty-four States that have so far held a referendum on the Eighteenth Amendment has voted to repeal it. The ratifications of only twelve more States are needed, and as fourteen more States will vote between now and November 7, it seems almost certain that the amendment will be repealed in three months from now. Yet curiously little attention is being paid to the formidable problem of liquor control which will then immediately confront us. At the insistence of Governor Lehman the New York legislature has passed a temporary control bill that will be effective between the repeal of prohibition and April 1 next; but the overwhelming majority of the States have taken no action whatever.

Congress will probably be called upon to act on liquor control as soon as it meets in December. Its action must, of course, be quite limited in scope. Some reformers have suggested, for example, that the federal government itself take over the manufacture and sale of liquor, but obviously Congress will be unable to consider this. It will not merely lack any constitutional power to do so, but any popular mandate. The popular mandate, on the contrary, in so far as we have been given any direct knowledge of it, is precisely the opposite: the federal government is being ordered, in effect, to return the larger control to the States.

Congress will, however, have at least the same powers that it had before the Eighteenth Amendment was passed: it will still be able to regulate liquor in so far as it can do so under its general powers of controlling interstate commerce, and it will retain the tremendous power of taxation. The

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principles that should control this taxation are clear. The excise tax on liquor should be designed to raise close to the maximum possible revenue. This does not, of course, mean the highest possible tax rate, for a rate beyond a certain point may discourage consumption or provoke evasion to such an extent that it will lead to a smaller total revenue than a lower tax rate would induce. But liquor is a commodity of which it is desirable to discourage rather than encourage the production and consumption. Further, although the rehabilitation and erection of breweries and distilleries is rapidly getting under way, the federal government is still in the rarely fortunate position of dealing with a liquor industry that has not yet reached the full growth that it would attain if given free rein. The government, therefore, need not hesitate lest its action threaten to injure or destroy an already established industry or to throw legally employed men out of work.

One further qualification must be made, of course, concerning the excise-tax rate on liquor. It should not be so high as to furnish too strong a motive for evasion. It is not merely, as we have already remarked, that so high a tax might lead to the collection of a smaller total revenue—for it is possible that a high total revenue might be obtained even with fairly widespread evasion—but it is of the utmost importance not to perpetuate or to raise up again an army of bootleggers and their allied lawbreakers and criminals. It would be better to lose considerable revenue than to put on successful evasion a premium so high that ordinary means of law enforcement cannot adequately cope with it.

A still further principle should guide the federal government's liquor-tax policy. The tariff rates on imported liquor should in no case be higher than the excise duties on similar kinds of domestic liquor. We recognize that politically it will be extremely difficult to put such a principle into effect. The attempt to enact it would instantly confront a powerful and determined opposition; the brewers, the distillers, the California grape growers, and possibly even the farmers who raise the grains from which beer and whiskey are ultimately made, will be represented by energetic and perhaps none too scrupulous lobbyists. If this plan were seriously discussed, they would talk ruin; they would be astounded at the lack of patriotism shown in throwing the rich American market open to foreign sellers, and they would of course allege that we were preventing the creation of jobs for thousands of American workmen, and even that we were throwing those already in jobs out of them. But every rational consideration dictates that the tariff on liquor should be solely for the sake of revenue and not for "protection." In the present case not one of the usual arguments for protection has any force. Above all, not the principle of "self-containment." There is not only no peacetime or military need for a great liquor industry in America; it is of the highest importance that we should *not* create one. The constant and sinister power and influence of the liquor interests in American politics in the old days were not the least important of the evils that brought the demand for prohibition. That power and influence must be kept to a minimum, and one way of keeping them so is to hold the domestic liquor industry itself to a minimum. Even with foreign and domestic liquor competing on equal terms, there will be plenty of room for all the grape growers, brewers, and distillers already established. The contention that American labor will be hurt is the exact opposite of the truth. For imports of foreign liquor will provide the necessary purchasing power for foreign nations to begin taking imports from us again, so that our desperately crippled export industries—of which cotton and wheat are not the least important—can win back part of their markets and restore the Americans engaged in them to employment and a decent livelihood. Further, the opening of a good market, for example, to British whiskeys and French wines, is almost certain to lead to a lowering of the British and French tariffs against us.

So much for the federal-government program. All other regulations will of course come within the power of the States. At the very least the States and municipalities should adopt regulations similar to those prevailing in England, where the number and neighborhood of the "pubs" are controlled, and limitations on the hours during which liquor may be served by them are strictly enforced. For example, in some districts no liquor whatever may be sold in the morning, and only, say, between the hours of twelve and two at midday and between five and twelve in the evening. It is to be hoped, also, that at least some of the States will themselves take over the sale and perhaps even the manufacture of liquor. The result of the two systems operating side by side might provide us with a real basis of comparison.

# The Reichstag Fire

THE trial of the five men charged with the burning of the Reichstag has been set for September 21. Preliminary hearings will be held in Berlin, in the Reichstag building, to inspect the scene of the crime. The trial itself will take place in the Reichsgericht building in Leipzig.

Five men have been indicted for this incendiary crime: the Communist, Torgler, deputy and leader of his party's Reichstag group; Dimitrow, Tanew, and Popow, Bulgarian Communists; and the Dutchman, Van der Lubbe, who was discovered in the building immediately after the fire and confessed to the deed. But what of the other four? "While certain details remain mysterious," writes the *Manchester Guardian,* "for example, the part played by the Nazi agent, Van der Lubbe, the complicity of the Hitler Government in setting fire to its own Parliament must now be taken as an established fact." "While Dr. Ernst Oberfohren was still alive," the article continues, referring to the leader of the German Nationalist People's Party, the publication of whose memorandum on the Reichstag fire in the *Guardian* immediately after the fire resulted in the alleged suicide of its author, "his connection with the memorandum had to remain secret, but since his death there is no reason left for secrecy. It was his wish that the memorandum should be published, for he was a man of high principles and strongly disapproved of the methods employed by the Hitler dictatorship. He considered the Reichstag fire and the connivance of the Nazi leaders Göring and Goebbels an unpardonable outrage and believed that this outrage should be exposed." With these words the great liberal newspaper merely confirms what has long been public knowledge, that the author of the sensational articles it published immediately after the Reichstag fire was none other than the chairman

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of the German Nationalist People's Party, the intimate friend of Hitler's Minister, Dr. Hugenberg. Dr. Oberfohren's memorandum has now been published in its original form. It shows not only that he was convinced of the complicity of the Nazi Cabinet members, Göring and Goebbels, but that this conviction was shared and openly expressed in the Cabinet by the Nationalist Ministers, Hugenberg, Krosigk-Schwerin, Seldte, and Neurath. Because they hesitated to endanger the government of which they were still a part, perhaps, too, because they feared the vengeance of the Hitler desperadoes, they did not expose the connection of their Nazi colleagues with the incendiary outrage. Their reluctance cost Dr. Oberfohren his life. By their silence they themselves have become partners to the affair and can no longer be counted on as witnesses for the innocence of the accused.

The facts of the case are quickly told. On February 24 the Karl Liebknecht Haus in Berlin, the national headquarters of the German Communist Party, was raided by the police. On February 26 the official National Socialist press service announced that evidence unearthed in underground chambers of the Liebknecht Haus proved that the Communist Party maintained a secret organization in the same building. The police, so the announcement stated, also found detailed plans for a revolutionary uprising in the near future. They promised immediate publication of these documents but none has as yet been released. In his memorandum Dr. Oberfohren insisted that this material was smuggled into the Karl Liebknecht Haus to furnish the desired incriminating evidence against the Communist Party. On February 27, just before 10 p.m., the Reichstag building went up in flames. The police, who were immediately summoned, discovered a seedy-looking individual in the cellars of the Reichstag who was identified by a passport and a Communist membership card found in his trousers pocket as Marinus van der Lubbe, allegedly a Dutch Communist. The passport, it has since been proved, was forged, as was the membership card of the Dutch Communist Party, from which Van der Lubbe had been expelled two years before because of insubordination and subversive criticism.

He confessed his guilt at once and charged not only the executive of the Communist Party but the Social-Democratic Party also with having incited him to commit the crime. On the following day Deputy Torgler, who had—according to his usual custom—remained in the Reichstag building until late in the evening, was arrested. The Bulgarian Communists were held because foreign Communists living in exile in Germany "are under suspicion in any case of standing in the service of the Communist Party and of serving that party in its terroristic work." Moreover, Van der Lubbe had stated that he was "hired to set fire to the Reichstag by men with a strong foreign accent." It has been asserted, by the way, although this is not yet established, that Van der Lubbe had delivered National Socialist speeches four weeks before.

According to a statement in the *Reichspost* by Fire Chief Wagner of Vienna:

> It would have been impossible for a single person to lay the fire that partly destroyed the German Parliament. Without helpers it would have required hours of undisturbed work to prepare for the conflagration that followed. This was impossible, since groups of deputies met in the building until late in the afternoon. . . . But even more important, how would it have been possible for anyone to transport the required amount of benzine into the building past the guards that stand at every gate? A large number of good-sized cans were undoubtedly required and no trace of them has been found. It seems highly improbable, therefore, that one person, as it is officially reported, could have laid the fire.

Dr. Oberfohren in his memorandum explains what would otherwise remain inexplicable. He shows that the incendiaries, Nazi storm troopers, gained admission to the Reichstag through the heating plant that connects the building with the official residence of the Reichstag president, Göring.

The chiefs of the Hitler Government are undoubtedly the real incendiaries of the Reichstag. They committed the crime to force the suppression of the Communist Party and to justify its suppression before the world. The trial before the Nazi court in Leipzig will be a bloody farce. But the highly qualified international tribunal of noted jurists which is sitting in The Hague has already brought to light so much that proves the guilt of Göring, Goebbels, and their companions that the German government will probably not dare to carry out its murderous intentions.

# Diego Rivera at Work

THE best show in New York at the moment is on view at the New Workers' School at 51 West Fourteenth Street. The New Workers' School is an extremely modest institution situated over a store as shoddy as the neighborhood itself. One climbs three flights of stairs, almost vertically, for there is no turn at the tiny landings; one goes past some partitions that break up the loft into schoolrooms; one pays an admission price (minimum) of ten cents; and suddenly one is back in the Florence of the fifteenth century. Or at least the decorations which Diego Rivera is painting on the wall there are in the *fresco buono* of the old Italians, that sovereign method of painting which Michelangelo, mannerless old anti-feminist that he was, called the work of men, while oil painting, he said, was for women. Few artists since his time have taken up the challenge to use the difficult medium; indeed, it had been so nearly forgotten that considerable experiment was needed to recover the old tradition. It is in respect to the style of painting, its absolute permanence, and its sober and powerful effect, that one may speak here of Florence and the Renaissance. Otherwise, in respect to the ideas expressed, one is in the full tide of modern life and, what is especially notable considering that Rivera is very Mexican even among Mexicans, it is safe to say that most visitors will find themselves plunging deeper into the history of our country than they have done for a long time.

The first scene he has painted is of New York at the time of its colonization; the second is of the Boston Massacre; the third gives us Shay's Rebellion (with a scroll bearing Jefferson's glorious words that the tree of liberty must be watered from time to time with the blood of martyrs and of tyrants); the fourth shows Margaret Fuller, Emerson, Thoreau, and Samuel F. B. Morse, the intellectual leaders of their time, and at the same time the country's material expansion through Hamilton's banking system, the trading of the Astors, and the drive for more territory under James

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K. Polk. Other scenes from American history are sketched on the panels which Rivera will complete before he goes to Mexico at the beginning of October in order to decorate there the School of Medicine, formerly the Palace of the Inquisition, an assignment which will give full scope to his sense of dramatic contrast and—for all the traditionalism of his medium—his sense of the triumph of our modern time over the dogma of the past. As for his rendering of our own history, the most sluggish and indifferent person must be stirred to pride in his country, even if its darker aspects are recorded with an unsparing hand.

For a month more, then, anyone may watch one of the greatest living mural painters at his work. The admission charge goes toward a fund for preserving the frescoes, which are so made that the separate panels may be detached from the wall whenever the school can move to better quarters. P. T. Barnum, could he come back to earth, might see the chance for showmanship here, but the press has almost ignored it so far, and the New Workers themselves have failed to capitalize the event.

And these paintings are for the public. If the appeal of the ripe development of modern art and of the sight of the man at work are lost for us, we may at least profit by the reminder that the great frescoes of the past, perhaps the supreme testament of the European races, were created for the eyes of all men.

# Back to the Bicycle?

IT started in Hollywood, they say, and quickly spread East. In the national capital it is reported to be going strong, and has broken out virulently in New York City. We are talking, of course, about the bicycle fad, which, like that for roller skates, represents one of those familiar swings of the pendulum which continually are bringing back into the present segments of the past.

In Washington even the tandem bicycle, that incomparable first aid to courtship of the Gay Nineties, has reappeared. That Washington should be quick to revive the bicycle is natural, because in the heyday of the "wheel"—as it was then called—the broad, smoothly paved streets of the national capital, comparatively free from commercial traffic, made it a cyclists' paradise. The streets of Washington were practically all paved with asphalt in an era when those of New York and other cities were largely laid with "Belgian blocks" or just cobblestones.

But in spite of congested traffic, New Yorkers are not to be denied their chance at a fad. A firm dealing extensively in articles for sport reports that sales of bicycles are 50 per cent higher than a year ago, and in secluded parts of Central Park intrepid young women are practicing a (to them) new art. Newspapers told the other day of New York twin brothers who returned from the Chicago fair on bicycle back. One of them rode out alone, because the other was a cripple. The parents gave the boy at home enough money to go out and back also—by bus. In Chicago the boys had a second seat fitted over the rear of the bicycle, and hitched on a trailer with a camping outfit. Then they started home, the brother with the whole legs doing the pedaling, and camped out nights along the way.

Of course the bicycle never went out—quite. A good many boys have continued to use it for work or play, and a few men even have ridden bicycles to and from their jobs right through the Dark Ages of the "wheel." But women have hardly been seen on bicycles, in this country at least, for twenty long years. The Gay Nineties were the years when the bicycle was the ruling passion. And rule it did as few means of transportation or methods of sport have ruled before or since. It was the coming of the "safety" bicycle to supersede the old high-wheel model that made the regime possible. The "safety" bicycle made the machine fool-proof and therefore adapted to the multitude. Gradually the adjective "safety" was dropped; for the model soon became the only one. Not that the new model was much easier to ride than the old, but it *looked* a whole lot easier; and when you fell off you didn't have nearly so far to go.

What a brave cavalcade it was! There were "Saturday-and-Sunday" riders then just as there are "Saturday-and-Sunday" drivers nowadays. The smooth streets of the cities and the fairly passable roads into the country hummed and whirred with wheels; riders went forth alone, in couples, or in groups and companies; there were thousands of bicycle clubs—a few still survive—with all the glamor and prestige of golf or yacht clubs today. Bicycling was a far more sociable and gregarious sport than automobiling ever has been or can be. Women fell captive to it almost to the same extent as men, and the craze for speed on the roads—say fifteen frightful miles an hour!—was as rampant then as today, though not as dangerous. The man who turned his handle bars low, bent down his face almost to meet them, crooked his back like a camel's hump, and then pedaled for dear life, regardless of scenery, pleasure, or the rights of pedestrians or other cyclists, was a "scorcher." The "scorcher" of the bicycle age was the same kind of fool—though less of a menace—as the driver who races his car through the public streets today. Means of transit change, but human nature and the percentage of fools remain fairly constant.

The tandem wheel was the *ne plus ultra* of the bicycle age. There was romance even in the Gay Nineties—little as the younger generation of today believes it—and many a sedate matron of 1933 took her first ride down Lover's Lane on a tandem. Naturally the bicycle was introduced into many of the popular songs of its day, but it was the tandem which inspired the greatest ditty, the single one perhaps which any number of persons can recall today:

Da-a-isy, Da-a-isy,
Give me your answer true!
I'm half cra-a-zy,
All for the love of you.
It won't be a sty-y-lish marriage;
I can't afford a carriage;
But you'll look sweet upon the seat
Of a bicycle built for two.

Yes, it was a brave cavalcade, the bicycle parade of the Gay Nineties—and almost a decade after. Can it come back—in any other, that is, than a sporadic, partial, and temporary way? No, not unless the new devotion to the old sport should be strong enough to produce special paths for bicycles along our roadways. The bicycle and the automobile can't live on the same pathway. At least the bicycle can't.

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# Issues and Men

## They Will Never Learn

I HAVE never been of those who have admired the intellectual powers of the great bankers and captains of industry, so long the masters of our national fate. They have usually seemed to me extraordinarily narrow and shortsighted, owing their dominance to luck and influence or to talent along one single line; just as Henry Ford owed his phenomenal rise to the creation of a single motor and to a single idea—cheap mass production to put the horse and buggy out of business. We newspapermen are ourselves very largely responsible for the American habit of regarding successful rich men—and for leading them to regard themselves—as omnipotent and wise beyond their generation. Our great newspapers toady to wealth and rush off as often as possible to a Gary or a Kahn or a Myron Taylor for an opinion on any subject. Only a few of the magnates, like the present J. P. Morgan and Andrew Mellon, deny themselves to reporters and keep their mouths shut. Usually they proceed to air their views—only to reveal their mental mediocrity, their sometimes incredible stupidity, and their always complete ignorance of what the masses of their fellow-citizens are thinking about and desiring. They never learn.

I am moved to these thoughts by the obstinate and stupid attitude taken by the automobile manufacturers, the oil men, and the steel and coal barons toward the NRA and the question of codes. Now it is obvious that the adoption of a code is anything but a simple matter, meaning as it does a mental and business revolution, often the end of an era of complete selfishness and ruthless, underhand business competition. The technical difficulties in the way must often be very great. But the attitude of the leaders of these several industries reveals again that they never learn. The recovery act is clear and plain concerning its general objects, and quite frank in its statements that criminal punishments will be meted out to those who disobey. But the "great" business men involved in these major industries had neither the gumption nor the common sense to take a helpful and constructive and cooperative attitude. It may be a terrible trial to them to have to yield on the open shop, but it is inevitable. So why not be pleasant about it? That would pay. But no, they have taken the opposite course; they have been silly enough, some of them, to refuse to meet with William Green. Now I personally do not like Mr. Green either, or believe in him as a labor leader. But if I were in their place I would yield to circumstances and swallow the dose. The trouble is that these captains of industry have not yet learned that their old order is dead, killed by their own selfishness, stupidity, and shortsightedness.

Let us take another case—that of Machado in Cuba. The daily press has reminded the public of the luncheon given for Machado in 1927 in Wall Street by several of the great magnates, and have reprinted Thomas W. Lamont's fervent remark on that occasion that he "would like to see Machado President of Cuba indefinitely." As I was a guest I have never written of what occurred at that luncheon. Now that the facts are out, I shall merely say that for crassness it exceeded in many respects anything I have ever listened to. Machado revealed himself completely. He assured his hosts that as long as he was President their investments in Cuba would be as safe as those in the United States; that there would be neither revolutions nor labor troubles as long as he sat in the presidential chair. He would fix any one who tried to make trouble. As I walked away with a prominent, liberal, and today still unbesmirched banker, he said sarcastically: "That's the kind of talk I like to hear," with a smile which revealed how he felt. "Look at your shoes," I replied, "Machado has not left a bit of blacking on them; they are licked clean." Never have I seen more smug satisfaction than that expressed by the other bankers and business men present—there were fully forty if not fifty of them, and some of them have figured considerably in the press since that time in ways they have not liked. It is not surprising, after such support, that Machado believed that he could have his way with the Cuban people without hindrance.

The point is that these bankers had no greater wisdom or wider vision than to think that Machado was the kind of man who ought to rule Cuba, and that it was to their interest to have him in the Palace at Havana. They could not see, and I doubt if they yet can see, that that speech of Machado's stamped him as totally unfit to rule over a single human being, and certainly as the very last man they should have backed, or induced the State Department to back, under Coolidge and Hoover. They paid no attention to the warnings of *The Nation* and the liberal press. They knew better, and so they winked at Machado's record of incredible cruelty and wholesale murder to the end. If some day their heads "roll in the sand," as Hitler once put it, they will until the last be as surprised and pained and filled with resentment at the bitter injustice of it as the French aristocrats were when they mounted the guillotine. They will never learn.

The truth is that, as I know them, they are neither very bright nor very learned; their mental processes are befogged by their complete certainty that they possess greater wisdom and intelligence than anybody else—especially than those whom they are pleased to call radicals. They are, I admit, sometimes efficient in their special lines. But when one gets beyond that, beyond the scope of their daily luncheon horizon, it is appalling how limited their views are and how narrowly they are hedged in by their prejudices. Often their power has completely gone to their heads. I was talking the other day with one who knows the Morgans well. He thought Mr. Morgan and Mr. Whitney had made an extremely good showing on the stand in Washington—granted our peculiar American brand of business ethics. But he added: "What I cannot stand about them is their smug sureness that they know better than anybody else how everybody else should act."

Oswald Garrison Villard

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# Spain's Unfinished Revolution

By PAUL BLANSHARD

*Madrid, July 27*

IN the sun-drenched streets of the Spanish capital no sign is visible that a revolution has taken place or that another may come soon. Occasional groups of civil guards with black patent-leather tricornes stalk about, supplementing the white-helmeted policemen. Several truckloads of blue-uniformed shock troops of the republic are trundled across the city daily, ready for riot duty, but there have been no riots recently. The government has been shrewd enough to act before the event. Secret meetings that may lead to revolt are watched from within and without and their leaders sent to prison promptly. On July 22 and 23 "extremists" of the right and the left to the number of 116 were quietly arrested in Madrid and other Spanish cities.

Trial or no trial, these prisoners may not see freedom again for many months, since even under the republic political prisoners may be held almost a year without trial. Some of them may be sent to North Africa, to which the republican revolutionists who are now in power were consigned in the days of Alfonso. The Azaña Government is wisely refraining from the death penalty even for those counter-revolutionists who attempted a national revolt last year under General Sanjurjo, because death penalties would only make martyrs of the monarchists.

The unfinished revolts and local disturbances in Spain in recent months indicate a more than casual restlessness. The national revolution is obviously incomplete. It has gone just so far in destroying the control of the nation by the propertied classes, and now the government must choose to finish the job or surrender many of the gains that have been made. The indications are that the government will push forward with determination and intelligence, but the outcome is still in doubt. The full pressure of conservative interests is now openly against the Azaña-Socialist coalition; the newspapers, both Catholic and syndicalist, are blazing with sarcasm and propaganda; and the employers are organizing to save themselves and what is left of their privileged position. The situation is exactly what one would expect in a capitalist country when the members of an idealistic Socialist Party are numerous but not dominant in the government. The Socialists have accomplished enough of a social revolution to arouse the capitalists without taking away their power. Many of these same capitalists were delighted to have Socialist cooperation in overthrowing a corrupt monarchy, but they are determined now that the Socialist Party, which was the best-organized force in the republican revolution, shall not reap any further fruits for the working class. My impression is that a return to the monarchy is unlikely but that the danger of a conservative dictatorship is real.

In a sense the present government is a semi-dictatorship, since its democratic mandate is not altogether clear and since it is permitted to use dictatorial methods under the Defense Act. The present Cortes, with Azaña as Premier and Zamora as President, is the same constituent assembly that was elected in 1931 to write the constitution and the laws necessary to put the constitution into effect. The Cortes is sole judge of the meaning of "putting the constitution into effect."

The opposition is crying that the government is already serving illegally because the local elections of last April in many parts of the nation resulted in overwhelming defeat. Technically the opposition is right, but it is doubtful whether a new election would change the balance of power between rights and lefts. The Socialists still are the largest group in the Cortes, comprising approximately 113 out of 450 members, although the numbers shift daily through resignations and deaths; the Radicals with 86 lead the opposition. In Spain as in France parties are often nothing but tiny nuclei dominated by clever politicians, kept in existence in order that their leader may use them as a weapon with which to bargain for a Cabinet position. Premier Azaña heads a party of 30 in the Cortes, the Republican Action group; while President Zamora comes from a party with only 10 representatives. The present coalition government of Socialists, Radical Socialists, Republican Actionists, Catalonian lefts, Galicians, and a few smaller groups dominates the Cortes by a margin of from 25 to 30 votes. But that does not mean that the government has a margin of only 25 votes in the Cortes balloting. In Spain the opposition usually expresses itself by staying away. The constitution requires that the government must secure for the passage of important laws an absolute majority of the membership. Today in an important test vote I saw the government win by 254 to 9, with many gaping vacancies in the red plush seats. The government's real margin of success was only 27.

The Azaña coalition continues to reveal many grotesque features. It is anti-clerical in the sense that it wants complete separation of church and state, but it is serving under a Catholic President, Zamora, who really created the crisis of last June by yielding to church pressure. During that crisis the clericals evidently thought that they could force a national election and the fall of the ministry by placing the responsibility for forming a government upon the Socialists. To their surprise the Socialists were able to muster substantially the same Cabinet that now rules under Azaña, so Azaña was returned to power. Azaña is a shrewd, progressive tactician who represents quite accurately the rather uncertain socialistic tendencies of the government. The most important work of the government is in the hands of the three Socialist ministers, Largo Caballero for labor, Indalecio Prieto for public works, and Fernando de los Rios for foreign affairs—a Socialist membership of three in a Cabinet of ten. If the government moves to the left, it is likely that Azaña will be succeeded by either Prieto or Caballero, who is head of the Union General de Trabajadores, the chief labor federation. If the government moves to the right, the leadership will naturally go to Alejandro Lerroux, opportunist extraordinary and head of the Radical Party. I do not see anyone on the horizon who casts a shadow remotely resembling Mussolini or Hitler. It is universally conceded here that the Socialist Party is by all odds the best organized and disciplined party in the nation and that it could block any move toward fascism in the near future.

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Yet in spite of the strength of the Socialist Party the revolution has not brought any substantial amount of socialism to the Spanish cities. Madrid looks more like Los Angeles than Moscow, an old Los Angeles with seasoned beauty in its architecture but emulating all our Western bourgeois customs, including posters advertising Marie Dressler and 15,000 Spanish maidens whose make-up resembles that of Joan Crawford. Public ownership of industry is almost unknown. Not a single great industry has been socialized, and the present government has no plan for socialization. Caballero was frank enough to admit this to me, and when I showed some surprise he said: "Oh, I suppose we couldn't socialize industry without coming to blows. Perhaps it will come to that but it hasn't yet."

It may be asked, then, what the Spanish revolution has accomplished in the direction of socialism. Apparently four things: the improved physical conditions of labor, the improved status of labor organizations, the partial release of education from church control, and the beginnings of a genuinely socialistic land program. The last is the most recent and probably the most important thing in the Spanish revolution; the rest are simply reform measures whose parallels are to be found in Western capitalist countries.

Spain is still chiefly an agrarian country with three predominant forms of farming: large estates owned by the landlords in the south, little individualist farms in the middle and east, and a contract system of farming in the north. The present government decided after the Sanjurjo revolt of last year to seize all the estates of the grandees of Spain without compensation, and also to socialize the great estates of the south, especially those in Andalusia and Estremadura. Its program, contained in the orders of last September, was revolutionary, but only a very small part of it has been carried out. The government was given authority to socialize land through its Institute of Agrarian Reform in three ways. It may organize collectives under state management as in Russia; it may permit control of different plots of land by farmers working cooperatively under state supervision; or it may assign socialized land to individual farmers on perpetual leases so long as they stay on the land and work it.

Under its agrarian-reform laws the government planned to socialize not only the great estates of former nobles but also all great estates comprising more than 20 per cent of the section in which they were located, partially compensating the owner at a price set by the government's finance department to be paid over a period of years. After that the government planned the seizure of village common lands which had been illegally taken by landlords.

Apparently the only step taken toward carrying out this land program is the declaration of social ownership of land previously held by rebellious nobles. Not all of this land, which comprises more than 400,000 acres, has as yet been taken over for operation. Meanwhile the landowners are organizing definitely for counter-attack. So long as they own land they can use their ownership punitively to throw out of work the more aggressive of the farm workers, as they did in July in Salamanca, the region west of Madrid. After 30,000 farm workers of the region had joined the Socialist unions and forced up wages, and after a great strike in January, the employers called a meeting in the bull ring (a favorite place for public meetings) and organized company unions which they used as engines of discrimination. Parenthetically it should be noted that if the present policy of breaking up large estates continues, the bull rings of Spain may soon become public forums, since the raising of good fighting bulls is a luxury industry, confined, like the ownership of the Boston Red Sox, to self-sacrificing patriots. In the Salamanca region the organized farm laborers are fighting back strenuously with the cooperation of the government. Farm laborers staged 150 strikes in this one region alone during the year 1932, and brought 700 other disputes to the labor courts.

These labor courts (*jurados mixtos*) offer a striking parallel to the machinery of arbitration set up under President Roosevelt's National Recovery Act except that the government representatives on various tribunals are more definitely pro-labor than would be permitted in the United States. The typical labor court is composed of six employers, six workers, and a chairman who is chosen by the government unless the employers and workers can agree upon a chairman by unanimous vote. The chairman is the key executive officer of the court and has wide powers. The court itself is allowed to settle all disputes coming to it on petition of workers or employers which have to do with wages, hours, discharge, overtime, and the duration of a contract. An appeal from the court goes to the Minister of Labor, who is a Socialist. Also, all decisions of a general character are made in the last analysis by the Labor Minister.

The statistics of petitions and strikes in industry and agriculture during 1932 give proof of the immense gains made by labor through these courts of the new government. Of 19,796 judgments rendered by the labor courts in 1932, 14,460 were in favor of the workers and only 5,336 in favor of the employers. The constructive policy of the courts is shown by the record of 50,766 peaceful settlements as compared with 2,400 strikes. These labor courts have immensely improved the physical conditions of both farm and city workers and have given for the first time to Spanish workers the right to organize unions with genuine power. The working day has been reduced to eight hours even on the land; the day-of-rest law applies even to journalists; and wages have increased while wages have been going down in other parts of the world. Spain's unemployment is very small, partly because of the government's great public-works program. The membership of the U. G. T. has increased by two-thirds since the revolution and has a total of perhaps 1,200,000. The anarcho-syndicalist unions, on the other hand, have greatly decreased in power and membership, although they are still important in Barcelona. The government has put into effect a program of workmen's compensation for accidents, but its other social-insurance measures are still in the formative stage. Health insurance and old-age pensions are being planned, but they are not in effect, and the absence of a good program for unemployment insurance is disappointing.

In the background of the capital-labor struggle that is going on in Spain is the struggle between the socialistic state and the Catholic church for control of the national culture. The issue involved is not freedom of worship—the churches are open and well attended, and the clergy is outspoken in opposition to the government. Other important issues are involved. Who shall control the schools? Shall the government continue to support the ordinary priesthood? The second question seems fairly well answered in the government's successive reductions of its contribution to lay priests from 65,000,000 to 42,000,000 to 26,000,000 to 4,000,000

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pesetas (the figures only approximate) during the last four years. This is supposed to be the last year of the government's payment to the church.

The great test of the government's anti-clerical program will come in December when the new educational code for the complete secularization of common schools throughout Spain goes into effect. The church leaders have sent out definite orders to the priesthood to tell Catholic parents to keep their children away from the government's schools. The government is equally determined to give Spanish children secular teachers who may be Catholics but who shall not be members of any religious order. The government is hurriedly training a corps of teachers for the new task.

The church, in attempting to block the government's educational program, is stressing the issue of economy. Where is the money to come from to establish the new school system? The leader of the Catholic Action group in the Cortes told me that it would take a billion pesetas a year to put the government's educational program into effect. (A peseta is now about twelve cents in American money, but it has a considerably higher buying power in Spain than twelve cents has in the United States.) Fernando de los Rios, former Minister of Education and now Foreign Minister, told me that his government proposed to spend 400,000,000 pesetas on education next year, whereas it was spending 300,000,000 this year. He was vague as to the sources of new revenue, but there is no doubt that the revenue can be secured if the government wills it.

# High Finance in Boston

By HENRY W. HARRIS

THE story of how banks have used their security affiliates for the purpose of unloading bad paper on investors was spread upon the public record in the Mitchell investigation. It remained for a thirty-two-year-old judge in Boston to take the next step and hold directors of a security affiliate to personal, civil liability for such a transaction. In a recent decision which rocked State Street, Judge John J. Burns of the Massachusetts Superior Court declared that the former board of Beacon Participations, Inc., all of whose members, with one exception, were directors of the Beacon Trust Company, must pay for losses sustained when they allowed the bank to use the affiliate as a "dumping ground" and for those resulting from the juggling of its funds in other ways, to which he applied such terms as "reckless expenditure," "flagrant breach of fiduciary duty," and "deliberate misapplication of other people's money."

The case has already become a classic, for it is the first in which a court has held directors of a security affiliate responsible for "bad faith" to the corporation on account of their zeal in protecting the interests of the bank. The prominence of the defendants is important both because of the attraction their names exerted upon people who were invited to buy stock in Beacon Participations, and also because many of them have held, and hold, key positions in the financial and social life of Boston.

Charles B. Jopp was president of the Beacon Trust Company, a leading Boston bank, and of its affiliates. He later became a vice-president of the Atlantic National Bank, with which the Beacon was merged, and now is an official of the First National Bank of Boston, the dominant financial institution in New England, which has absorbed both the other banks. The court describes him as "the principal factor in causing the losses complained of."

The list of directors must have been appealing to the public, which was invited to buy Participations stock in a large advertisement appearing in the Boston newspapers. It included William P. Hart, president of the Charlestown Five Cent Savings Bank, an important institution; Robert Gould Shaw, Jr., now dead; Charles F. Adams, head of the First National Stores, the largest grocery chain in New England, and owner of the Boston Braves and Boston Bruins; Gardner Poole, a well-known business man, formerly president of the Boston Rotary Club; Fred B. Lawler, formerly vice-president of the Atlantic National Bank and now an executive of the First National Bank; Arthur T. Lyman, a well-known broker, son of one of the wealthiest men in Massachusetts; Fred D. Jordan, partner of Lyman in the firm of Jordan, Lyman and Company, Inc.; Charles R. Gow, president of Warren Brothers, a nationally known construction concern, former postmaster of Boston, and one-time head of the Associated Industries of Massachusetts, an organization which has lobbied consistently at the State House to break down the laws protecting women and children in the mills. Mr. Gow has just been appointed by President Roosevelt to be State Engineer for Public Works for Massachusetts.

Adams left the board reasonably early, and is absolved in some of the transactions. Into the directorate later came Allan H. Sturges, president of the new Pilgrim Trust Company, which was granted a bank charter while this suit was pending, and George S. Mumford, former president of the Atlantic National Bank, the third largest bank in Boston until it was absorbed by the First National. It is only fair to say that these two were not parties to the original scheme. Mumford, in particular, was held responsible only for continuing the procedure followed by his associates in managing the property of Participations for the benefit of the bank.

Edward Spiegel, who brought the minority stockholders' suit for the benefit of all the stockholders, is a Boston lawyer with an entirely different background. He stumped the State for La Follette in 1924, and has since been a member of the Progressive Action Committee of Massachusetts, the active hold-over committee of the La Follette organization, on which Robert Fechner, now head of the Civilian Conservation Corps, once served. Spiegel held twenty-five shares for three years without receiving a statement. When a statement was finally given to the stockholders, it told as little as such statements usually do. Spiegel saw Jopp, and received what he described as a "pep talk." When further attempts brought little information, Spiegel began an investigation which lasted for more than a year. He then brought suit. That the holder of such a small number of shares should go to such lengths surprised the defendants, who assumed at the start

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that Spiegel was attempting to "hold them up." They are just realizing that his guiding motive was the public interest.

Spiegel is thirty-five years old. Judge Burns is three years younger, and his appointment two years ago was generally hailed as the beginning of something pleasantly new on the Massachusetts bench. The son of a street-car motorman, he is a graduate of Boston College and of the Harvard Law School, where he later became professor. At the time of his selection, the story of his background and his record made a tremendous impression. In language much stronger than anything in Spiegel's bill of complaint Judge Burns tells the story of Beacon Participations. It comprised six steps.

Step number one was the organization five years ago of Beacon Participations, Inc., affiliate of the Beacon Trust Company, for the advertised purpose of dealing in securities. The bank issued to the public nearly $2,000,000 worth of non-voting preferred stock, but bought all the common stock—25,000 shares—and with it voting control, for $1,000. All the directors of Participations, with the exception of Lyman, were directors of the bank.

Step number two was the "unloading" on Participations of what the court describes as "a worthless note" for $520,000 held by the Beacon Trust Company against its real-estate affiliate, Beacon Building Trust, Inc., on such terms that the bank could not be held as indorser. The directors who voted this transaction for the security affiliate were, with one exception, members of the board of the bank and also of the real-estate affiliate. The court found that Participations was "an ideal dumping ground," and had been "organized for the purpose, among other things, of buying this note." Before the Senate committee in Washington, Mitchell, of the National City Bank, described such a transaction as "bailing out the bank."

Step number three was the setting up of a joint account with Jordan, Lyman and Company, Inc., controlled by two of the directors of Participations, who had made a handsome profit in floating the preferred stock. Under its terms Participations was to put up the money and share the profits and losses equally with the brokerage concern. In justification of this deal the defendants argued that the brokers were contributing their knowledge and experience to the transaction, but the court commented dryly that Jordan and Lyman, as directors of Participations, owed it this knowledge and experience anyway.

The stock market crashed, and instead of sharing the profits without putting up any money, Jordan, Lyman and Company found itself liable for half the losses and heavily indebted to Participations. Participations made a deal by which the brokerage concern was released, and Jordan, though he was known at the time to be insolvent, assumed the debt. He is now a resident of Maine and could not be served in the suit. The court expresses surprise that Lyman, whose father was one of the wealthiest men in the State, never became personally liable, and that the whole obligation was placed on Jordan, who was "financially irresponsible." Judge Burns calls the joint-account transactions "a deliberate misapplication of other people's money."

Step number four was the payment of dividends out of capital, so that the bank might retain voting control after Participations began to lose money. Under the articles of incorporation preferred stockholders, who had contributed 80 per cent of the capital, would acquire voting rights when four quarterly dividends were unpaid. To prevent this, the directors voted dividends, though there were no profits to divide and the company's capital had become seriously impaired. The court found this "a deception on the shareholders and on the general public. The shareholders received part of their capital, believing it to be income, and by such improper declaration the voting rights of the preferred stockholders were illegally postponed. The declaration of dividends gave a false picture of the company's financial condition to the prospective purchaser of its shares."

The fifth step was the secret repurchase by Beacon Participations of nearly 52,000 of the preferred shares, for the purpose of retaining voting control for the management in any event and, perhaps, to help "bail out" the "insiders." To make this purchase the directors spent three-quarters of a million dollars.

Judge Burns found that the directors gave the preferred stockholders no notice of the repurchase and that the transaction was "a reckless expenditure" which "practically cleaned out the treasury" and, in addition, left Participations with most of its good collateral pledged to the First National Bank for a loan of $110,000. The preferred stock held by the public was entitled to receive $20 a share upon liquidation. The court found that there was not enough money in the treasury to pay this when the repurchases started, and that the transaction worked as an illegal discrimination against those stockholders who knew nothing of the buying up of the shares. It also made it impossible for them to gain voting control and protect their rights within the corporation.

The sixth step in the story of Beacon Participations was the entry of a plea in bar to Spiegel's suit by the current directors, who had been elected by the defendants in the suit, on the ground that he had not exhausted his remedy within the corporation before bringing the case to court. The situation was thus created of a board of directors spending the stockholders' money in an attempt to defeat a suit which was brought for the benefit of the corporation and its stockholders and in which any money recovered would go into the company's treasury. Upon Spiegel's demand, the corporation, through its new board, has recently waived its claims of appeal from Judge Burns's findings. The Judge could not see what remedy in fact Spiegel had through the directors, since seven of the defendants were directors of the Atlantic National Bank, which held voting control, and the defendants could thus control any litigation brought against them by the directors; and since, in addition, the new directors were the nominees of those accused in the suit.

An interesting feature of the defense was the claim that the stockholders had ratified all the acts of the directors inasmuch as Jopp had appeared at the annual meetings with a proxy for the 25,000 common voting shares and, holding a meeting with himself, had ratified all the legal acts of the directors. The court commented that such ratification could not apply to illegal acts, and added: "It would be monstrous if the rights of the Class A stockholders could be swept away by the vote of a man who was the principal factor in the losses complained of."

The damages which each of the defendants must pay remains to be determined, but the judicial finding of liability against these men and the precedent thus established is of far greater importance.

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# The Artist and the Depression

By SUZANNE LA FOLLETTE

NOT long ago, in a broadcast from one of our secret radio stations, I remarked that bourgeois society had neglected the artist, and salved its conscience by assuming that he needed to be neglected in order to be great. The sentimental belief that it takes a bruise to make a genius is coextensive with philistinism, being one of its more tiresome corollaries. I remember once hearing a young woman at a dinner party saying in an insufferably affected voice to an astonished artist, "I suppose you live in a romantic little attic." I supposed he didn't, knowing that the craze for bohemianism had made romantic attics too expensive for impecunious devotees of the arts. But in a way the lady's picture was authentic—authentically bourgeois: a picture of genius pining in garrets, living on short rations, and distilling from neglect and disappointment beauty which will delight the hearts of collectors, after death and the dealers have established its market value.

It is as false, of course, as a picture from the brush of any Ananias, because the values and the emphases are wrong. Its provenance is clear enough. The assumption is that since such artists as Rembrandt, Manet, Cézanne, Seurat, were unappreciated *and* great, they must have been great because they were unappreciated; *ergo* all artists need to be unappreciated in order to be great—an assumption which becomes meaningless when one sets beside the roster of neglected geniuses that of the geniuses who were not neglected: names such as Giotto, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Rubens, Delacroix. An artist is made great by neither public indifference nor public acclaim, but by the genius that is in him and an environment in which sufficient culture is current to permit that genius its full development. If the environment also affords discriminating appreciation, he is likely to develop more swiftly and happily, for the artist, like anyone else, is inspired and stimulated by judicious praise. If it yields also a demand for his work, he is likely to be more productive—although too great a demand may tempt him to sacrifice quality to quantity, a danger recognized by a distinguished French painter recently when he said that the more popular among his colleagues might be expected to do better work now that dealers were no longer standing at their elbows ready to snatch their canvases from the easel.

The number of artists who incur this risk is small; and much smaller in this country than in France. Few American artists have to steel themselves against the demands of dealers or anyone else. The buying public is extremely limited, and a goodly share of its patronage is appropriated by the time-serving pseudo-artist. Moreover, our largest buyers of art prefer to pay three or four hundred thousand dollars for—let us say—a bad Lawrence rather than three or four hundred for a good painting by a native and needy painter. Paying high prices for the works of dead men enhances the purchaser's social prestige; paying low prices for those of living men does not. A great many people really believe that only death makes an artist important; like the girl who remarked wonderingly that Redon was already a great painter although he had been dead only a few years.

Though being poor does not make the painter or sculptor an artist, being an artist may be pretty generally counted upon to keep him poor, especially if he is obsessed by new ideas and given to experiment. And so we come back to the picture of struggle and neglect, somewhat modified in the interest of accuracy.

There is more in the distorted original than mere conscience-sopping. There is a sort of left-handed acknowledgment of the artist's importance to society. And his importance to this country, I venture to believe, lies no less in his work than in his way of life, which is governed by a standard diametrically opposed to the standard of material success by which the vast majority of his compatriots measure their neighbors and themselves. In a society enslaved to wealth, he lives most like a free man. For the values which are important to him are not material but spiritual; his interest is in creation, not in acquisition. Therefore he accepts poverty, not because he feels differently about it from the colored man who complained that it was "so illconvenient," but because he prefers to use his time and energy in developing his talent rather than in pursuing the popular ideal of speculative getting and conspicuous waste. And his choice is as good an answer as any to anxious inquiries about what a civilized society would substitute for raw acquisitiveness as a spur to ambition and ingenuity. (Here I may be reminded that other people have also made this choice. I would not deny it, but I happen to be writing now about artists.)

Such a choice has its collateral rewards even in a society such as ours. The person whose primary concern is with things of the mind can stand adversity much better than the person who is chiefly interested in material things; not only because he is used to it, but because it has to hit him frightfully hard in order to affect his real life.

The depression of the past four years has hit a great many artists frightfully hard, although it had to get pretty bad before they noticed it at all. It was only natural that it should. In capitalist society art is a luxury, and a luxury which potential patrons of the arts will forgo before they will give up their yachts, their automobiles, and their peregrinations from one rendezvous of pleasure-seekers to another. The people who in normal times would buy works of art are feeling poor these days, whether they actually are or not; they will not buy unless they can do so at prices ruinous to the artist. And so the dealers display their wares to an apathetic public and wonder how to pay their rents, while the artists whose works they used to sell are so far behind in their rents that they no longer even wonder. I speak of artists; I don't know how badly the market for society-dressmaker portraits has fallen off—although for the benefit of those who take this phase of the situation to heart I may quote in passing an itinerant foreign "spot-knocker" of that school who told me last fall that his annual pilgrimage was proving disastrous. Nor do I know or greatly care how many milk-and-water mural decorators are out of jobs since the commissions at Rockefeller Center gave out. I

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fancy, however, that the large public-building programs undertaken to relieve unemployment may save them from disaster, for it is in public buildings that they have always been encouraged to do their expansive worst.

The degree of adversity among artists varies from a falling of income below the taxable level to virtual destitution. I do not know any painter or sculptor who is starving; I do know of one or two who were reported to be. I know personally several others who would be starving if it were not for their friends or the Gibson Committee. The committee has been able to give emergency employment to some 80 out of 200 applicants. It seeks out churches or other non-profit-making societies which want paintings or sculptures but cannot afford to pay for them, supplies the artists and pays them, the societies furnishing the materials. It also provides teachers of art to settlement schools which would otherwise have no art departments. The artist is employed every other week, and the committee pays him $25; so he has an income of $50 a month, which will keep the wolf from the door if he can somehow get from some other source the wherewithal to keep a door between them. Even this measure of relief will not be available after September, when the committee closes its doors on a situation which its contributors took to be acute and temporary and have found to be acute and permanent.

It is not only the beneficiaries of the committee who face another crisis this fall. Several artists' colonies, I am told, are in much the same situation. Their members have been living on their friends, credit, and odd jobs; and the day of reckoning is not far off. Some efforts have been made by these communities to help themselves. In Woodstock, New York, one of the most numerous, a few public-spirited citizens and well-to-do artists formed an association which bought work from artists in need, or found work for them to do. In New York various attempts have been made, by both art lovers and artists, to beat the disastrous bear market in works of art.

The most picturesque if not the most successful of these attempts have been the open-air exhibitions in Washington Square, where the artists adopted direct producer-to-consumer tactics, displaying their wares on sidewalks and fences and acting as their own salesmen. Chicago artists have also resorted to this expedient, which has long been familiar on Montmartre. At the Independents' show last year it was announced that artists would be willing to barter their works for goods or services—a picture for so much dentistry, or a sculpture for a suit of clothes—but not much came of it. Art-loving people in this and other cities have for several years arranged shows and auctions around Christmas time for the benefit of needy artists, with a certain amount of success.

These attempts at relief share the salient characteristics of all efforts to alleviate suffering caused by the depression: they are unsystematic and wholly incommensurate with the need. The impoverished artist, like the impoverished bond salesman or the down-and-out worker, gets along as best he can from day to day, and never knows when the morrow will find him wholly destitute. It is quite as futile to advise him to try some other line of work as it is to say the same thing to the worker or the salesman. Other lines offer no better chance of a living than his own. American artists know this only too well. They are accustomed to earning their living wholly or in part by avocations; and in those avocations they now find themselves obliged to compete with formerly high-priced experts who are willing to work for anything they can get.

The unemployed artist, however, has a great advantage over the unemployed of industry and commerce. He doesn't have to find an employer in order to be enabled to work. So long as he can get the materials he can keep himself occupied; and that wonders can be achieved with very little in the way of equipment we have the mute testimony of those superb things which Van Gogh produced in pen and ink when he was too poor to buy colors. The east wind of depression is tempered to the artist not only because his chosen way of life has inured him to it but because he can forget it at least part of the time in the joy of productive labor. He can keep his powers keen through exercise, and need never know—as must the architect or the engineer, for example—how bitter a thing it is "to rust unburnished, not to shine in use."

It is hardly surprising that the depression has given impetus to a nationalist movement in art analogous to that in industry and commerce. When the controversy over Diego Rivera's superb and ill-fated fresco at Rockefeller Center was at its height, this movement rushed to share in the publicity under the name of "The Advance American Art Commission"—whatever that means. Part of its policy seems to be the practice of announcing its "regret" when a foreign artist is engaged to decorate an American building; and among the artists it most regrets are the two foremost modern fresco painters, Rivera and Orozco (whose American ancestry, by the way, goes back far beyond that of any member of the "commission"). It is an unfortunate movement, and would be more so if it were not for the significant fact that it is sponsored by painters and sculptors whose work, without exception, is profoundly regretted by American artists and discriminating critics of art. The artists know that it is much more important that art shall be good than that it shall be national. They know that if a Sert or a Brangwyn were excluded from this country, a myriad native purveyors of bathos would rush to cater to the taste that prefers a Brangwyn or a Sert, and American art would not be benefited. They know that if the foreign painter of obscenely flattering portraits were excluded, he would only be supplanted by the native impostor, and American art would not be benefited. And they know, too, that if an Orozco or a Rivera were excluded, American artists would be deprived of priceless instruction and inspiration. I do not look to see any American artist who merits the name rush to guard the native trough on the pretext of defending and promoting the native art.

The depression, chronic and acute, which weighs upon our artists is not to be lifted in such ways. An improvement in economic conditions will end the acute phase; the chronic phase will be relieved only by a solution of the general labor problem. Pending that solution, which seems about as far away as ever, becoming an artist will continue to be pretty much like taking a vow of poverty—with the sporting chance that good work or good luck, or both, will finally bring release.

[*This is the fifth of a series of articles on the economic crisis and the professional worker. The sixth, The Engineer and the Depression, by W. A. Shoudy, will appear next week.*]

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# Home-Owners in Revolt

By JAMES STEELE

*Cleveland, August 8*

IT is ten o'clock on a hot, oppressive July night. Up and down Lardet Avenue on Cleveland's East Side a throng of people is smiling, talking, laughing, arguing with the cops who are stationed along the street every few feet or gathered in bunches about squad cars and patrol wagons. There are nearly 300 cops—foot, mounted, and motorcycle—armed with clubs, tear gas, guns. They handle their clubs uneasily, eyeing the crowd anxiously, telling some of its members, "Aw, we ain't t' blame. We get blamed fur ev'rythin'." The men laugh and the women berate them in broken English, Bohemian, Hungarian. A Bohemian cop attempts to remonstrate with a woman in his poor English. A kid, standing by, jeers at him, "Why don't ye speak English?" The cop's mate, a burly, scowling 300-pounder, growls, "Oh yeah, well I was born an' brought up here all me life." "Gee, ye don't act like it," the youngster retorts while the crowd laughs. The cops walk off, muttering.

At the other end of Lardet Avenue a large audience, closely packed together, is listening to a speaker from the Small Home and Land Owners' Federation. His voice booms out over the milling throng. "And why is John Sparanga being evicted? He has paid in over $4,500 on this house, and while he was working he kept up his payments to the bank regularly. Three years ago he lost his job and he hasn't worked since. As long as there was a penny in the house he kept up the payments, but there came a day when he couldn't keep them up. He had to get help from the Associated Charities to feed himself and his wife and five kids. But that didn't mean anything to the bank. They tried to foreclose on him three different times—but we, the organized small home-owners, stopped them." Thunderous applause, echoing down the avenue. Then a whispering among the crowd as police converge and surround them.

The speaker wipes his brow and glances at the cops. "They beat us to it this time. They came at six o'clock in the morning and kicked John Sparanga and his family out on the street. Mrs. Sparanga tried to hang herself, she was so worried, but the cops wouldn't let us put the furniture back—and when we tried to they gassed us, gassed *us,* American citizens and taxpayers that pay their wages. Friends, we're living under the American Constitution, and that gives us the right to free speech, free assemblage, and the right to protect ourselves against tyranny. We say, *use it!*"

A roar of approval, repeated again and again, swirls through the oppressive darkness—and then, suddenly, red flashes and reports in the dark street; thick white clouds slowly rising; men, women, children stumbling, clutching at their faces, shouting to each other not to use handkerchiefs, then pressing back before the waves of tear gas. Those on the edges of the crowd, trapped by police, run between houses, over fences, through backyards into the adjoining streets—and there, too, are the police, the reports, the clouds of sickening, stinging gas. "Back to Lardet! Back to Lardet!" Youths scatter among the fleeing men and women, stopping them, shouting orders: "Back to Lardet!"

Back on Lardet Avenue there has been clubbing and shooting—a dozen men have been shipped to hospital with scalp lacerations; two men have been rushed away, shot in the legs. But the crowd is not giving way; three times this day, since their first mobilization in the early morning, the police have scattered them with gas and clubs, but now they are strong in their united strength. The home-owner, the unemployed worker, is not standing alone; shoulder to shoulder with 10,000 others he is resisting those who would take from him his home and happiness. Conscious of this strange new feeling, yet unable to voice it, the men and women stay. They yield before the police in one place only to swell their numbers in another. Isolated groups of demonstrators are pursued and bombed and rush for safety into the massed thousands. Here and there, on the outskirts of the crowd, the police toss bombs, but the crowd gives way just enough to avoid the fumes. The cops are at a loss: in spite of their guns and clubs and tear gas they are afraid, for this is a crowd that won't scatter, a crowd that is strangely grim and determined. They retreat back into Lardet Avenue while the crowd settles around the block, surrounding it, vowing not to leave until John Sparanga is back in his home.

Twenty-four hours later the crowd is still there, and the cops are still there—jumpy, afraid of the crowd, cursing their superiors for sending them out on such a job. They hustle everyone along the street, and break up small gatherings as much as they dare—but there is no tear gas and there is no clubbing. Perhaps the fact that several of their mates fell victims last night to husky Hungarian housewives with old-fashioned iron pans has cooled their ardor.

Two days later there is a mass demonstration on the Cleveland Public Square. The home-owners, massed around the statue of Tom Johnson, protest police brutality and Sparanga's eviction, decide to demand redress from Mayor Ray Miller. Five minutes before the parade arrives at City Hall the Mayor remembers a pressing luncheon engagement and leaves; but the banks are urged to go slow on foreclosures—the Cleveland *Press* says maybe if there were a federal home-loan office in Cleveland the "riot" would not have occurred—and the next day it is announced that a federal home-loan office will be opened in Cleveland!

John Sparanga may not be saved; but the dogged demonstration in his behalf has saved many other Sparangas from a similar fate.

The organization which staged the demonstration—the Small Home and Land Owners' Federation—began last October as a spontaneous "home defense" movement among working-class Hungarians. It answered a deep-felt need among the smaller home-owners for some method whereby they could defend themselves against the foreclosures which were eating up their savings and breaking up their families. It spread rapidly, crossing all barriers of language, religion, and politics, until today it has more than 14,000 members of all political beliefs and religions among people of such diverse nationalities as Bohemians, Lithuanians, Americans, Ger-

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mans, and Italians. Although the federation's membership represents one-fourth of all the small home-owners in Cuyahoga County (homes valued at $7,000 or less are listed as small homes), its strength is actually much greater. The families of the members are solidly behind it, as are the Unemployed Councils—two forces which make it possible for the federation to rally 10,000 people at an eviction in the course of an hour or two. Through this ability to stage mass demonstrations quickly the federation has prevented literally scores of evictions; on one day this summer it stopped five. According to its own figures the number of foreclosures in Cuyahoga County has declined 45 per cent since it was organized.

This has been accomplished almost wholly through voluntary rank-and-file action. There are no paid officials in the organization; all that they receive from it is expense money, for which they must render a detailed accounting. Each branch is an autonomous unit, electing its own officers and carrying on its own neighborhood activities. Should some important issue arise, however, which the branch does not feel capable of handling by itself, it merely sends out a telephone appeal and the other branches ship in members by the hundreds—as they did in the Sparanga case. The coordinating body for the city is the City Central Body, made up of delegates elected by the branches. Recommendations issued by this body have to be carried out, but should any branch wish to appeal, it has the right to do so—and some of them have done so.

The federation has taken the lead in publishing a biweekly newspaper, the *Home Defender,* in organizing an educational department, in setting up women's and youths' auxiliaries which draw into the direct activity of the federation the wives and children of the members. The *Home Defender,* incidentally, is issued by a volunteer staff of young people, sons and daughters of members, and is much more readable than newspapers of protest usually are. Its paid circulation is about 10,000 each issue.

Naturally, since the federation controls so many votes, the politicians have not been slow to discover that their hearts bleed for the poor home-owner. The Republicans tried to take over the organization first. When they failed they retired to brand it as a "red outfit." The Democrats, a little more clever, have played up to the militancy of the rank and file, merely attempting now and then to secure indorsements for local Democratic measures. Such attempts have been uniformly squelched by the City Central Body. With the local elections coming in the fall, the Democrats are now forcing the issue, feeling that they can split the organization if they cannot control it. How successful they will be is indicated by the decision of several of the largest branches to run their own candidates in the council elections and to call on the Socialist and Communist parties for cooperation in naming candidates for wards where a united working-class candidate would have a good chance of election.

In spite of lack of publicity the reputation of the federation has spread. Branches have already been organized in Columbus, Toledo, and Akron. Inquiries have been received from Pittsburgh, Chicago, Long Island City, and California. The small home-owners of the United States are organizing, tardily perhaps, but none the less surely; and the Cleveland Small Home and Land Owners' Federation, with its militant policy, seems to indicate the direction they will take.

# Why the Milk Farmers Struck

By ROBERT WHITCOMB

*Chenango County, N. Y., August 15*

IN 1919 the milk farmers, or dairymen, of New York State had a Dairymen's League under G. W. Slocum that virtually acted as a farmers' union and won a milk strike for them. Then, as now, the farmer liked to think of himself as a peaceable, law-abiding citizen, but he hated the idea of being the "goat." Shortly after the World War, however, the viper of Wall Street in the guise of the Borden Company extended its fangs still farther into the country and gradually bought up the local cheese factories which had handled the surplus milk that had been kept "to home" during the strike. At the Jersey City convention of the league held about that time, the almighty dollar of the big interests railroaded the league itself into the hands of the trusts. Soon the gains of the strike were lost.

Since that time New York State has become dotted with milk plants owned by Borden's or Sheffield's or the Dairymen's League, with no serious competition from small independent dealers or weak farmers' cooperatives, and practically no organized opposition from the farmers themselves. Dairymen joined the league or they did not, but they brought their milk every day, and they were obliged to take the company's word for the butter-fat test and also for the proportion of their milk retailed as fluid or drinking milk. The farmer received a check monthly, and that ended it. It is reminiscent of the checkweighmen in the mines, except that the farmer is a small business man in his own right, with thousands of dollars invested in land, buildings, machinery, and cattle—his farm. Nevertheless, the farmer finds himself to all effects an employee of a company with offices in New York, and he must take New York's word for it that the prices fixed are fair.

The depression, followed by mass unemployment and wage cuts, lessened buying power and therefore the consumption of milk, thereby increasing the surplus to be used for butter, cheese, ice cream, powdered, evaporated, or condensed milk. It was this situation which led Helen S. K. Willcox of North Norwich to prescribe killing "half our herds" as the only sure remedy for the milk farmer, because "you can lead a horse or a corporation to water, but you can't make either of them drink." The strike leaders this year repeatedly offered to supply only the fluid market and keep the surplus "to home," planning to start independent cheese factories of their own, but these offers were always rejected. The surplus is obviously wanted by the milk companies and can be sold. And the farmers are paid a pooled or average price, a combination of the high and low prices of fluid and surplus milk—the proportion is measured by

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the company and is revealed in the monthly milk check, though the price is usually known a few weeks in advance.

Last year the chaos in the milk industry, which involves a million persons in New York State, became evident when the farmer's check just about equaled his cost of producing the milk. Only the organization of dairymen on a State-wide scale could give the farmers the strength to get a fair proportion of the consumer's dollar, but such a movement, though it had the support of Cornell agricultural experts, the State Grange, and Governor Roosevelt, failed. Independent farmers could not organize without endangering their market, members of the Dairymen's League considered their contracts sacred, and the huge milk machine built up after the war poured forth propaganda, as it did again during the strike this August. Nevertheless, local leaders in the counties where they were known formed a loose organization that enabled the farmers to call fairly representative State-wide conferences.

This year several things happened. The farmer's price dropped below his cost of production—some monthly checks were not sufficient to pay for the cows' milk-ration feed. The season was exceptionally dry; not only the pasturage was burned up but also the cornfields which fill the silos for the winter. Poor food lessens the quantity of milk and cuts down the butter-fat content. The farmer faced a winter of starvation for both his cattle and himself, with machinery and buildings deteriorating, fences falling down, bills and taxes accruing, notes and mortgages falling due. The monthly check became still smaller. The farmer was and is getting between one and two cents a quart for his milk, while Cornell University has told him what he already knew—that it costs more than two cents a quart to produce milk. Figures came from Wisconsin showing that farmers there get a higher price for their milk, with lower costs of production, smaller companies, poorer markets, while at the same time the Wisconsin cooperatives were reported to be returning more profit on their investment than the New York State milk companies. In the meantime the New York companies got help from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and the farmers were discussing the dividends paid from funds which they considered were earned by farmers, and wondering whether or not this or that company had watered its stock. Newspapers reported that Larry Fay, until his death, and other racketeers collected one cent on every quart of milk sold in Greater New York.

The Milk Control Board, established in April by the passage of the Pitcher bill, promised help for the farmer. In January the farmer got 87 cents a hundred pounds (47 quarts) for milk testing 3 per cent butter fat. (In Wisconsin the farmers' cooperatives pay $2.76 a hundred for milk testing 3.5 per cent butter fat, though the consumer pays only 10 cents a quart.) The board raised the price to $1.68, but at the same time raised the retail price from $4.70 to $5.64 a hundred pounds. And the farmer did not get this regularly, nor for all of his milk. The slight rise in prices since the Milk Control Board was established has been more than offset by the rising prices of cattle feed under the NRA.

Considered in terms of the individual farmer, the work of producing milk is not only unpaid but wasted, and the farmer is paying from his small holdings some of the profits still being made by the milk monopoly. One farmer in Herkimer County, with eight people working for him, and a farm herd worth $30,000, received a monthly check of $150, while his expenses for the month covering bare necessities for his family and cattle were $200. Another farmer in the same valley drew a check of zero because he owed a silo company money for a silo and the payments for it were taken by the milk company from his milk check. This man attempted to get food from a relief agency, but assistance was refused because he owned a farm. Men who haul farmers' milk to the milk stations often get more than the individual farmer. Farm hands work hard for no wages at all; they get only food, clothing, and lodging, and this year their work is still harder because streams are dry and water must be drawn for the cows. It takes one man a full day to draw water for a large herd.

Out of working for nothing, or working hard to make less than nothing, comes hopelessness, then desperation. A common cause, common misery, bound the farmers together. They attended crowded meetings in Grange halls and county courthouses; they were addressed by county leaders, politicians, and business men. Local merchants and professional men were all sympathetic, bearing in mind that the farmers are their best customers. Veterans of the 1919 situation came forward and told how it was done. Public-spirited farmers and leaders were constantly running to Albany and trying to get a hearing before the Governor or the Milk Board. On July 25 forty representatives from fifteen counties informed the Milk Board that if nothing was done the farmers would strike on August 1, not against the board, but against the big milk interests, especially the Dairymen's League, which is composed of well-to-do farmers but controlled by Borden's. The board was skeptical, and said that such a strike would be against the State. The strike leaders, some of whom rationalized the strike into a "holiday," insisted that they were law-abiding citizens, but that they meant to get what they were "entitled to" by lawful means. They were unanimously against violence of any kind, although during the following excitement many of them smiled when they heard of the persistent way the "boys" had "blocked traffic."

The only hope of relief, aside from the bare possibility of a bolt from the murky blue of Albany, lay in a mass protest. Disorganized, separated by distance, 80,000 farmers grasped desperately for any straw of leadership. Among the leaders the most quoted names are Piseck, Blair, Woodhead, and Clemens. The Piseck brothers, of Herkimer County, are unmarried Polish-Americans, originally from Illinois, where they studied agriculture and the management of cooperatives at the State university. They were militant leaders, and rode all over the State addressing meetings, telling the story of the Dairymen's League kittens that turned into independent kittens when their eyes were opened. They insisted that the farmers meant business, but they counseled against violence, and when the accusation came from Hamilton Fish and Louis Cuvillier that Communists were leading the strike, no one was more indignant than the Pisecks. They have been farming at Newport for a dozen years.

Walter Blair of Sherburne, Chenango County, is a soft-spoken, elderly farmer who resents having been arrested for disorderly conduct because he tried to persuade another farmer to take his milk home. Charges against Blair were pressed by members of the Dairymen's League, who also tried to reject the Blair milk after the strike, and Blair un-

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derstood he was being told to keep his mouth shut, but he did not. Clemens and Woodhead are business men, Woodhead is a farmer on the side; Clemens is trying to popularize his Rutland Association for farmers.

Common grievances, however, produced a militancy among the farmers that transcended this leadership, and the strike was successful in attracting nation-wide attention before the multitude of forces against it broke its back. The leaders confusedly tried to call a truce, but the Governor and the Milk Control Board would not deal with strikers, particularly since, in spots, the enthusiasm of local strikers took the form of administering milk baths, turtling trucks, shooting at thermos trucks, or stoning troopers in spite of tear gas. Even the rank-and-file farmers are inclined to pity the "poor boys" in the State police force—they have such a rotten job to hold down. Governor Lehman made effective mention of the National Guard without calling it out. Extension of the milkshed into other States is still another weapon of the milk companies, although given time enough the farmers of other States might have joined the movement. Radio and press further confused the issues, while the Dairymen's League published large advertisements proclaiming the danger to the "babies' milk supply," although the strikers guaranteed free milk for babies and carried out their promise in Amsterdam, where only babies under two and a half years old got milk. When the truce was proclaimed, neither Clemens nor Woodhead was present, and the latter called the strike off in the western part of the State. Now, at least, the leaders are accorded more attention at Albany.

# The Nazi Hexenkessel

## A Personal Letter

[*We are able to vouch for the authenticity of the following letter which describes the continuing boycott of Jews in Germany.*—Editors The Nation.]

*Zurich, August 15*

DEAR M.: How everything has changed in your old Vaterland! One could cry at the thought that Jews are compelled to live there, or rather to exist. I feel very strange and sad at the thought that now for the first time I am able to write you how I have really felt during all these months—parents are not allowed to write to their children about the things they are most concerned with in the home country. Whatever so-called "atrocity tales" you may have read are all absolutely true. For a time it seemed as if the waves of cruelty had calmed down, but a few weeks ago the campaign of hatred started all over again and the prospect looks darker and more dreary than ever. The mourning among the Jews cannot possibly be described; one has to experience it to believe it. It seems like a mockery to read in the German press:

> An American who is traveling through Germany for the National Broadcasting Company of New York is full of praise for the German discipline and order which is prevailing all over the country. No Jew is molested and everybody may attend to his own affairs in greatest peace, whatever business he may be engaged in.

Can world opinion be so naive as to believe such a report? And this American is alleged to have repeated this report over the air in the United States and praised with great enthusiasm the "wonderful" conditions in Germany. I am very much surprised that the N.B.C. should lend itself to such reporting.

Jewish stores are suffering very badly from the pressure of the Jew-baiting, since by law no municipal or federal employee is allowed to buy in a Jewish store. Immediate dismissal is the punishment for such an "offense." In all Jewish wholesale stores brown cloth is being confiscated. All Jewish stores are picketed, mostly by proletarian women who consider themselves very important with their white armbands which bear the words, "Buy German Goods Only." The department stores are picketed usually by four of these ladies, the big stores by three, the smaller ones by two, and the little shops by one. The other day I walked with O. past M.'s department store, which of course is Jewish, and I sent O. across the street to N.'s department store, which is Gentile. Since from my appearance nobody would think that I am Jewish I dared to trick the Nazis. With a dumb, innocent face I asked the honorable ladies who were picketing the Jewish store: "Is this a German store?" "Oh, no," was the answer, "you are not allowed to buy here!" "Why not?" "These are Jews! If you buy here, you will be punished by the party, provided you are a member." "Who knows me within the party? These people have such lovely inexpensive things in their windows." "You are better known by the party than you expect, and besides, Gentiles have just as cheap and lovely things," came the answer. "Very well," I said, "I shall cross the street and see what the German store has to offer."

I walked across to meet O., who had just come out of the Gentile store. We both returned then to M.'s store and looked at the windows again, knowing of course that we were being watched. The minute we entered the store, however, an excited woman followed me: "For goodness' sake," she said, "do not enter that store. A moving picture is being taken of you and will be shown on a public screen." Then all of a sudden three young Nazis appeared and handed O. a handbill which read: "If you do not want to burden your conscience do not buy from Jews. If you do your picture will be taken and shown on the screen!" I wanted to send you the original, but the employees of the store asked me to let them show it to the proprietor, as the distribution of these handbills is not officially permitted. As quickly as these young men appeared they vanished.

Another scene in front of the same store: A lady wearing the swastika started to enter the store. She was warned as I had been. I heard her say: "I buy wherever I want to!" We waited until she came out again. As she rushed into her waiting limousine, a Nazi jumped to the running board, closed the car, and off they went. That was all one knew.

Two weeks ago five Jews committed suicide within two days. Four of them were among our personal friends. One of them, Dr. J., who could not stand life in Germany any longer, said: "A German soldier shoots a bullet through his head rather than leave his fatherland!" The funeral of Dr. J. was attended by a very large congregation of the foremost citizens of the city, but not one single Christian colleague of his showed him the last honor in spite of the fact that he not only had been a member of the doctors'

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guild for many years but also had held many honorary posts.

My letter would never end if I were to tell you all that we have experienced; it is fortunate that one hardens and forgets in one's old days. J. L. told me the other day that when she went to the church to confess on boycott day, the pastor told her: "Pray for the poor people who today are persecuted so unjustly!" And my "pastor" told me never to tell anybody what I think, when I informed him that I would say to anyone who asked me about my identity: "I *am* a Jewess and I *was* a German." To all of us life in Germany is so disgusting and hateful that we would rather leave everything and run away, and yet it is not so simple.

Switzerland seems like a dream. No brown uniforms on the streets, no swastika flags, no military march music, with which we "German" citizens are fed during twenty-four hours of the day, through radio or through school children, who yell the Horst Wessel song in every possible and impossible way, or through *Vereine,* who patrol the streets singing at very late hours of the night waking everybody up. Even the smallest of the small join in. Recently on the street I met a group of kindergarten children ranging from three to six years of age, led by their teacher. They carried of course the swastika banner and sang the Horst Wessel song. I heard them shout behind some people: "Tueff, tueff, tueff, there comes another Jew!" That's how Germany lives!

Your best friend, W. S., is wearing the Nazi uniform, and since I do know that he has been forced to wear it, I simply cannot visit the family any more. He howls with the wolves, and I cannot differentiate this time between voluntarily and involuntarily. On the other hand I can understand his action, because it means to him to be or not to be, and after all he is the sole support of his parents. In spite of all this, I should feel shameless if I were to enter a home where the *Westdeutsche Beobachter* is being read and the swastika and Nazi uniform are worn. That my long intimate friendship with Mrs. S. has to end because of this makes me extremely sad.

Did you read what happened to the family of Scheidemann? Be very careful what you do, I implore you. Do not forget that we are still living in the *Hexenkessel* [witch kettle].

YOUR LOVING MOTHER

# Sonnet

By MARK VAN DOREN

As if I went to meet you at a run,
And ran too fast, and midway of a mile
Stumbled, spent of breath, and lay in the sun
Till the slow warmth revived me—so your smile,
And so your wordless welcome both restore
My halting mind that brings too much to say,
My tongue that is prepared to tell you more
Than ever will be needful to me—nay,
You teach me then, though I too soon forget,
How nothing had been needed but these eyes
That with the dew of absence still were wet,
This prisoned love that with its noiseless cries
Never will be heard by even you;
But you well know the bars it hungers through.

# Afternoon at Hyde Park

By MARGARET MARSHALL

*Scene: Hyde Park*

*Time: Friday in August*

*The First Family is sitting about the room in their accustomed attitudes. Mrs. Roosevelt sits at a great big desk writing an article. A* Woman's Home Companion *lies in front of her. Mrs. Dall, at a medium-sized desk, is writing a radio article. Sistie Dall sits at a very little desk "writing an article." The President occupies a large armchair in the center of the room. He is reading a code. Hugh Johnson is reading the code over his shoulder. Buzzie Dall is chasing a commodity dollar around the room. He is trying to catch it with a large net index number. The elder Mrs. Roosevelt is sitting beside the fireplace crocheting a Blue Eagle.*

*The sound of an airplane is heard outside and Raymond Moley enters.*

MOLEY: I have landed, and the situation is well in hand.

*Hugh Johnson salutes, the President salutes, everybody salutes.*

H. J. [*bluntly*]: Have those gangsters accepted the code?

MOLEY [*proudly*]: They've signed up as one man—with a few reservations. They accept the minimum wage—they say their men have been making too much—but they want more machine-guns and the open shop.

H. J. [*bluntly*]: They'd better not monkey with that bird.

MOLEY: That's what I told them, General. [*He salutes.*]

H. J. [*more bluntly*]: And what did they say?

MOLEY: They told me to go to London.

SISTIE [*interrupting in a sweet childish voice*]: Grandfather, may I "write an article" for the *Herald Tribune?*

THE PRESIDENT [*smiling*]: No dear, Raymond has the *Herald Tribune.*

SISTIE [*interrupting in a sour childish voice*]: But Raymond went to London. Why can't I have the *Herald Tribune?*

THE PRESIDENT [*taking off his smile*]: No, dear. Raymond has the *Tribune.* [*He replaces his smile.*] But why don't you "write an article" for the Washington *Bugle?* I'm sure they'd accept it.

SISTIE: Oh, goody! goody! I'm going to "write an article" for the *Bugle.* [*She dances about the room and scares the commodity dollar away just as Buzzie Dall thinks he has it.*]

*Hugh Johnson's voice rises bluntly.*

H. J.: Moley, you tell those gangsters for me that they can't have any more machine-guns. That's the trouble with this country. Too many machines throwing men out of work. Stuart Chase says so. [*He gets blunter and blunter. He paces the floor and makes a great racket. He shouts.*] This steal code has already caused more trouble than any two others put together. Moley, those kidnappers will ac-

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cept collective bargaining or we'll drive them out of business!

*The President smiles and nods his head. In the lull, Mrs. Roosevelt turns to Mrs. Roosevelt, Sr.*

MRS. R. [*whispering*]: You know, Mother, we really need thicker rugs in this room. Dear General Johnson is so heavy! [*Her face lights up.*] Oh, Mother, I have an idea! I think I'll take the car all by myself and drive out to the Rockies. I could shoot a bear and be back in no time. And a bear rug would be just the thing for the General.

*She smiles and walks back to her desk. She sits down and writes:*

> Vacations are always a problem in a family of limited means. Let me tell you of one thrilling vacation which I once took with four boys and six girls to whom I wished to give the experience of real Western outdoor life along with a practical lesson in catching bear rugs. . . .

*A maid enters and announces James Farley. President Roosevelt removes his broadest smile and put on a medium-sized one. Mr. Farley comes in.*

MR. FARLEY [*looking a little embarrassed*]: Good afternoon, Mr. President.

MR. R.: Yes, James, what is it?

MR. F.: Well—[*He hesitates. He twirls his hat in his hands. He blurts.*] I need a few more second-class postmasterships.

MR. R.: I told you, James, that you couldn't have any more second-class postmasterships until Christmas. What did you do with the ten I gave you for your birthday?

MR. F.: But Mr. President—

MR. R.: No, James, it's final—Who wants 'em?

MR. F. [*smiling eagerly*]: A lot of first-class Democrats.

MR. R. [*sternly*]: Are they literate?

MR. F.: Oh yes, they were supporting you long before Chicago, Chief.

MR. R.: Anything else?

MR. F.: Well not exactly. Just a rumor.

MR. R.: What? A rumor? What rumor?

MR. F.: Nothing to it of course, but I heard that Alice Longworth was working on a proposition to bring contributors to women's magazines under the Civil Service.

MRS. R. [*looking up and smiling*]: Alice does have such constructive ideas. But don't you think, Mr. Farley, that there are altogether too many services already? [*She turns back to her desk and writes. Mr. Farley departs, and the President puts his broadest smile back on.*]

*The sound of a tugboat is heard outside and Grover Whalen enters.*

MR. WHALEN: I have just come off the Macon, and judging by the ticker tape the NRA is having the greatest reception New York has ever seen. Lindbergh has nothing on this eagle.

HUGH JOHNSON [*bluntly*]: They'd better not trifle with that bird. [*Everybody salutes.*]

*Suddenly a bell strikes five. Mrs. R stops writing. Mrs. Dall stops writing. Sistie stops "writing." Mrs. Roosevelt, Sr., stops crocheting. Mr. Moley stops saluting. Buzzie stops chasing the dollar around. Mr. Johnson stops.*

MRS. R. [*rising*]: The forty-hour week is up. I know that we are executives but we must set an example.

*The door opens and a servant enters.*

SERVANT: Today's supper-for-ten-for-fifty-cents is ready in the icebox. [*She departs.*]

THE PRESIDENT: My dear, couldn't we bargain with her collectively to serve supper sometimes?

MRS. R.: Why Franklin, a code supper is all anybody could want.

*As they leave the room the President wearily removes his smile and hands it to Mrs. R.*

MRS. R.: Really, Franklin, this smile *must* go to the cleaners. You've worn it since last March.

# In the Driftway

THE Drifter's correspondence is piling up. And though he hopes his readers understand that their letters are none the less treasured for being unacknowledged, he cannot bear to have them entirely wasted on the desert air of a letter file. Here, for instance, is a letter from May Bancroft Cole in the wilds of Maine, who does up spinach in a paragraph:

> There are many jolly ways of wasting good time, but a peck of spinach can do more damage to an otherwise good forenoon than any other little thing I know. So take home a peck, pick out all the bad leaves, separate the roots, and cut out all the stalks. Then wash it—not in the bathtub, because that would be too convenient—but in something just a bit too small to accommodate the whole peck. Wash it through water after water until your fingers cannot detect the least particle of sand in the bottom of the pan. Then look at the clock and decide whether a woman isn't God's perfect fool to perform in such fashion.

*Touché!*

* * * * *

SPENCER WILLIAMS, representative in Russia of the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, writes a note from Moscow which indicates that the Drifter sometimes builds better than he knows:

> Your valued column in *The Nation* of July 5, 1933, bespeaks scorn for the habit of consulting the dictionary. That you have the courage of your convictions is indicated in the subsequent sentence which renders that good old catch-word of many a spelling-bee as "plaguey." That plaguy word has sent many a champion down for a count of ten.

* * * * *

THE most original plan for solving the Indian problem came out of somebody else's letter basket. It was invented by Lady Houston and published in the London *Sphere* of June 17. James Manning, also in the depths of Maine, mindful of *The Nation's* deep interest in India, was kind enough to pass it on. The article is entitled Why I Financed the Houston Expedition, and runs as follows (the italics are Lady Houston's):

> When I promised Lord Clydesdale that I would finance this great adventure and he went forth like Jack the Giant-Killer to conquer Everest, many people said, "Why does she do it?" My reason was this. A relation of mine had just come from India and three days after she left, her

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nearest neighbor was murdered. This sort of thing I was told is, alas, not unusual now in India. I asked why, and the reason I got was that since the agitators have been permitted to preach treason it has made the people of India think that we Britons have lost our courage, and they had better therefore stand in with these others. This made me feel that some great deed of heroism might rouse India and make them remember that, though they are of a different race, they are British subjects under the King of England, who is Emperor of India, *and what more can they want?*

For all Indians love brave deeds and must rejoice with us and feel proud of this act of heroism our valiant airmen have accomplished in mounting seven miles into the air over India's highest mountain, for this is surely a proof to them that pluck and courage are not dead in our race, and perhaps—who can tell—this may make them remember all the advantages and privileges they have enjoyed under the English rule, and all the loving kindness that was shown them by our forefathers, who fed them when there was famine, who nursed them when there was plague, and who administered absolute justice to them in every dispute; for as long as our race exists, indomitable courage and an unalterable love of justice will always be our outstanding characteristics; for that great thinker Maeterlinck tells us that the character of a nation never alters.

The Drifter has the impression, from reading the more instructive columns of *The Nation,* that the Indians would be more favorably impressed if every Englishman in India would go and climb Mt. Everest, and stay there.

THE DRIFTER

# Correspondence

## Agrarian Revolt in California

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

In sunny California, the land of the "all-year-round" climate, all has not been calm this summer on the agricultural front. Most of the crops of vegetables and berries are raised on farms operated by Japanese, who employ laborers from south of the Rio Grande. Working conditions among these laborers have been intolerable for many years. Wages by the hour were 10 cents and less. Piece work was common; the price for picking a crate of berries, 19 to 30 cents, depending on the variety, and this seldom netted the picker more than 90 cents a day. Hours were long; ten hours were standard, twelve were often the rule. In El Monte, the center of the berry-growing region, a system of virtual peonage prevailed. The Japanese owners gave their Mexican peons hovels made from chicken coops, dry-goods boxes, and improvised materials. In these terrible circumstances Mexican laborers tried to make a living and support large families of *niños.*

It was not expected that unorganized agricultural workers, with no tradition of labor struggles and in a foreign land, would take matters into their own hands. It is to their everlasting credit, however, that about the first of June they did do just that. The Mexicans in Santa Monica in the onion and celery fields refused longer to accept the wage of 10 cents an hour. The movement soon spread to other agricultural regions; when the agreement was finally signed, the strikers numbered 6,000. The first task of the leader, Armando Flores, was to call together representatives from the twenty locals to formulate demands. When this was done, Flores and members of his committee visited the different centers and set up well-organized units. Vacant store buildings were lent by Mexican owners for meetings, and there came into being the "Union de Campesinos y Obreros Mexicanos," which by July 6 was able to dictate its terms.

The strike was not won, however, without a struggle which threatened at times to be violent in both its local and international aspects. By the time a settlement had been reached, sentiment sympathetic to the workers in Southern California had spread to Mexico itself, where "La Crom," the powerful labor party of Mexico, declared a boycott of all Japanese goods and merchants in the republic. The Japanese in California resorted to many methods to kill the strike. Scabs of any nationality available were sent into the fields. Wives and children were commandeered to replace the strikers.

As usual the role of the police was to harass the picketers in every way possible. Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz of Los Angeles departed from his usual fair record in labor disputes and ordered his deputies to aid the Japanese in their effort to break the strike. Many employees were arrested and charged with being Communists. In El Monte seven leaders were arrested and accused of communistic tendencies; later the charges were changed to vagrancy. To insure their staying in jail, bail was fixed at the excessive sum of $500 each. The prosecution at El Monte was carried on not by a representative of the District Attorney but by an attorney for the employers, Mr. Doi, who was appointed special prosecutor by Judge D. S. Sores. The California branch of the American Civil Liberties Union was active in the defense of some of the strikers arrested on charges of vagrancy and conspiracy. Attorney A. L. Wirin of the union secured the dismissal of many cases.

The final agreement is temporary, but it means, nevertheless, a far-reaching victory for the formerly disorganized and discouraged Mexican farm population. The Japanese Association recognized the union and agreed to discharge all the scabs and reemploy all strikers showing union cards. Twenty cents per hour was set as a minimum wage. It is safe to say that this strike and its final success is one of the most interesting examples in recent years of a group organizing without outside leadership for the collective betterment of its members.

*Long Beach, Cal., August 16* THEODORE RODRIGUEZ
W. G. FENNELL

## Radio Censorship

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Not long ago, at the request of a woman's organization, I gave a lecture on Russia over a radio hook-up including stations in several States. What I said is of no importance to your readers, but it has occurred to me that they might be interested in knowing what the censor would not permit me to say. The following are the extracts which were deleted from my prepared manuscript:

1. "The Russians plan and experiment while we drift and cling to tradition."

2. "The frequency of bedbugs has been grossly exaggerated. Anyway, who ever died of bedbug bites?"

3. "The political structure of Russia is, I think, the most intelligent in the world." The sentence, "They tolerate no such absurdities as the direct election of chief executives, judges, or members of the national congress," was toned down to read: "They do not have the direct election," and so on.

4. After stating that in Russia one must not only work but must perform work which is considered socially useful in order to obtain a food card, I said: "No cards are given to

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salesmen, criminals, advertising men, prostitutes, realtors, financial counselors, racketeers, priests, Christian Science practitioners, chiropractors, solicitors, osteopaths, herb doctors, or night-club hostesses. After formulating this list I am again impressed with the profound character of the Russian Revolution." This entire paragraph was struck out. Perhaps this deletion was poetic justice, for I may have had too much fun in writing it.

5. "If the world has to choose between capitalism with chronic unemployment on the one hand and communism with inefficiency on the other, communism ought to win—and probably will."

6. "In my judgment there can be no revival of the Russian church. It rose and fell with the Czarist regime, with which it was inextricably involved. It can no more return than the murdered Czar can come back to life."

May I say in conclusion that I cannot see in this censorship, which I think is typical, any conspiracy on the part of "capitalism" to suppress its critics. Nor do I think the policy of the station owners is influenced by any sense of duty to preserve the existing order. So far as I can judge, the station owners have only one "principle" and that is highest net returns. They claim that their only basis for censorship is the exclusion of anything that will offend the delicate susceptibilities and prejudices of their listeners. The station operators resemble newspapermen in that they are relatively free from either susceptibilities or principles.

Radio censorship, apparently, is not for the protection of either capitalism, religion, or morality. It is enforced so that no offense may be given to that ill-defined class known as the "booboisie" to whom, supposedly, most radio advertising is directed.

*Mills College, Cal., July 15* GLENN E. HOOVER

# Taxation of Land Values

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

*The Nation* steadily and apparently conscientiously avoids all mention of taxation of land values and of the fact that real-estate values are practically untaxed values. I presume that this policy is adopted in deference to the interests of readers in other matters. If I find that *The Nation* is willing to publish short articles or letters showing that we have billions of available revenue if only we would take land value instead of taxes, I will be glad to subscribe to *The Nation* again.

*New York, July 15* BOLTON HALL

# Negro Firemen

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Murder for the Job in *The Nation* of July 12 recited the details of the tragedies of fifteen Negro railroad employees in Mississippi without mentioning any of the events leading up to them. The cause of this reign of terror is attributed to the employment of Negro firemen while white firemen go without jobs, the question of seniority rights and agreements to the contrary notwithstanding.

During more normal times the positions of firemen on certain southern divisions of the Illinois Central Railroad were divided on a fifty-fifty ratio between Negroes and whites. The whites accepted the division because there was plenty of work for both, and because "the left side of the cab" was the Negro's job for a number of years. With the depression came a demand from the white firemen that the ratio of Negro firemen be reduced 5 per cent. This was granted. In 1932 Negro firemen held approximately 45 per cent of the jobs. The new deal had not yet turned the corner, jobs continued to be scarce, and the white firemen asked for another reduction in the ratio of Negro firemen. Probably this was more than the railroad officials could stomach. Action on the request was delayed over a long period. Meanwhile, the murders began. Though all of the shootings have occurred in Mississippi, the Louisiana and Vicksburg divisions of the Illinois Central Lines are also involved in the dispute.

Mississippi's murders illustrate one phase of the intense struggle for survival of the Negro fireman. New contracts between the railroads and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen negotiated during the last ten years have been largely responsible for reducing the ratio of Negro firemen on the Southern Railroad from 80 per cent before the war to 10 per cent. On the Atlantic Coast Line, where formerly 90 per cent of the firemen were Negroes, the percentage is now below 40. In 1930 it had dropped from 90 per cent to 50 per cent on the Seaboard Air Line, with the brotherhood seeking a contract to permit further reductions.

These are the jobs that white men would not have before the war because of the low rate of pay and the dangers of the job. With the increased pay and improved status of firemen made possible by the government administration in 1918, Negro firemen have been forced to fight a "white-dog contract" whereby several lines have signed agreements with the brotherhoods that not only restrict the percentage and territory of Negro workers but in some instances provide that they be replaced by white workers as rapidly as vacancies occur. Furthermore, the great St. Louis and San Francisco system in 1928 issued regulations that pointed to the eventual elimination of all Negroes from train, shop, and yard service.

You liberals laughed in 1926 when President Robertson of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen told the Detroit convention that he hoped to report at their next meeting that not a Negro remained on the left side of an engine cab. Well, the "white-dog contract" is one of the results of that bit of demagoguery. And when the Progressive Order of Locomotive Firemen (a Negro organization formed because the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen does not admit Negroes) decided to fight this discrimination on the Atlantic Coast Line, Donald R. Richberg of defense counsel upheld that road's action because Negro firemen could not be promoted to engineers.

Is not this a dirty dish to set before Joseph B. Eastman?

*New York, July 18* IRA DE A. REID
Director of Research, National Urban League

# To Chicago Architects

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

It is earnestly urged that all architects and engineers living in Chicago and vicinity who are interested in joining an organization of technical men aiming at political action looking toward a new social order immediately write to Sol Greenberg, 2307 Haddon Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. This organization is not to be confused with Technocracy, Inc., with which it has no affiliations whatsoever, either in philosophy or in program.

*Chicago, Ill., July 13* SOL GREENBERG

*The article on Utility Profits in New Jersey by Samuel Morris which was announced for this week has been unavoidably postponed. It will appear in an early issue.*

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# Books

## Before the Summer Goes

By DAVID MORTON

Only remember, now, how summer brought
Green to the meadow, darkness to the trees,
And how the heavy, moveless airs are fraught
With sleepy sounds and fragrant silences—
And how the slope wore buttercups awhile,
So shining and so delicate and still
We walked around it, went an extra mile,
To set no bruising foot upon that hill.

When fields are stubble and the trees are thinned
For sunlight or for starlight filtering through,
We shall be listening how a little wind,
Lost in the world, may find naught else to do
Than cry and cry, and never will be still,
For green things gone, for yellow from the hill.

## A Note on Gertrude Stein

*The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas.* By Gertrude Stein. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

IT must be recognized, first of all, that Miss Stein's new work is the most "comprehensible" and therefore, in a sense, the least characteristic work of hers that has appeared. The reason for this is twofold: it is presumably not her book at all, but the autobiography of her secretary-companion, Miss Toklas; and its subject matter is of a traditional kind. Although she cannot help falling into her own syntax and idiom most of the time, Miss Stein makes at least as great an effort to be faithful to the style of her narrator as Defoe in writing "Robinson Crusoe." Such phrases as "awe-inspiringly" and "the house of our dreams" are intended to indicate Miss Toklas's sensibility rather than Miss Stein's own; and because this sensibility is a more familiar one most readers will have less difficulty in following it. The other reason that the book is so easy to read is that it can be enjoyed for its gossip, its fund of wit and anecdotes, its revelation of a "personality." Read in this way, it should provide inexhaustible fodder for the newspaper reviewers and abundant, if somewhat superficial, enjoyment for a large section of the reading public. Indeed, it is all too tempting to plunder some of its rarer bits for the purposes of this review; to repeat what Miss Stein has to say about Matisse, Picasso, Whitehead, Hemingway, among others; to destroy the reader's own pleasure in discovering these things for himself. For among books of literary reminiscences Miss Stein's is one of the richest, wittiest, and most irreverent ever written. In it she makes ridiculous all those who have ridiculed her for the last twenty-five years with the charge that she has had "nothing to say." She shows that she has a great deal to say of the sort that historians, biographers, and literary gossipers are in the habit of saying: Miss Toklas's "autobiography" is, among other things, a critical history of modern French painting and an account of the post-war generation in American letters. But if it were only this it would be an even less characteristic book by Miss Stein than it is; others could have given us these facts, but only Gertrude Stein can give us Gertrude Stein. And the deepest interest of the book lies in the insight it gives us into the genesis of the mind and sensibility reflected in Gertrude Stein's other and more characteristic books.

There have always been only two questions about Gertrude Stein: What, precisely, has she been trying to do these many years? What, if any, is the value of what she has done? The first, which has never been satisfactorily answered, is a question that has to do not only with her method, style, and processes of composition but also with her view or "vision" of experience. The second, which cannot very well be answered before the first, is a question involving all the questions of evaluation involved in discussing any artistic work. Most of the confusion in regard to Miss Stein's work has come from the attempt to answer the second question without adequately recognizing the difficulties of the first. For Miss Stein, who happens to possess at once a highly trained metaphysical mind and an extremely refined aesthetic sensibility, offers unusual difficulties to the critic—more perhaps than any other creative writer of our time. Before disposing of her work with any real comfort it is necessary to know a great deal not only about William James and Bergson and Whitehead but also about Cézanne and Picasso and Juan Gris. Her so-called naive and primitive writing, moreover, represents such a complex synthesis of these influences that the most painstaking analysis is required to reveal them with any degree of clarity. In the end, it is much easier to turn to a "difficult" writer like Mrs. Virginia Woolf. All that will be pointed out here is that, in the general character of her mind and in its central orientation, Gertrude Stein is not nearly so isolated and eccentric a figure in American letters as is so often believed.

Before Gertrude Stein went to Paris in 1903 she had been a favorite student of James at Radcliffe, she had published a paper in the *Harvard Psychological Review,* and she had spent four years at Johns Hopkins, where her researches had been praised by Halstead and Osler. She did not take her degree there because, as she says, medicine bored her. In Paris she immediately met Matisse, Picasso, Braque, and other young painters who were busily overthrowing the "literary" painting of the previous generation in favor of an ever more abstract practice of their art. Under their inspiration she appears to have done her first literary work; "Three Lives" was written, literally, under the shadow of Cézanne. The effect of this worship of abstraction on a mind already trained in metaphysical speculation was to alienate its owner even farther from the concrete life of her own time and country. In the rue de Fleurus Miss Stein settled down to the creation of a form of writing which in style attempted to reproduce the movements of consciousness as described by James and Bergson, in form and diction to conform to the ideal of austere simplification followed by the new school of plastic artists. Like them, she hated "literature" and sought "the destruction of associational emotion in poetry and prose." Like them also, she was indifferent to the qualitative aspects of subject; she merely "rendered" people, landscapes, and events. And because her passion for "elemental abstraction" appealed to a generation that had just been through the concrete discomforts of a world war, she became in time a kind of High Priestess. Although a follower like Hemingway, remaining "nine-tenths bourgeois," never got away from the "museum smell," her non-associational prose became one of the greatest single influences on the prose of her time.

In her detachment, her asceticism, and her eclecticism, Miss Stein can only remind us of another American author who lived in Europe and devoted himself more and more exclusively to the abstract. The principal difference between Henry James (whom Miss Stein reads more and more these days) and Gertrude Stein is that the former still kept within the human

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realm by treating moral problems. (Miss Stein has a more absolute aesthetic ideal: "the *intellectual* passion for exactitude in the description of inner and outer reality.") Moreover, what Miss Stein has in common with James she has in common with Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, and several other important and characteristic American writers: an orientation from experience toward the abstract, an orientation that has been so continuous as to constitute a tradition, if not actually *the* American tradition. Of this tradition it is possible to see in Miss Stein's writing not only a development but the pure culmination. She has pushed abstraction farther than James or even Poe would ever have dared—to the terms of literary communication itself, "Words and Sentences." The final divorce between experience and art, which they threatened, is accomplished. Not only life but the traditional means of communication in life are "simplified" to suit the patterns which she offers in substitute.

WILLIAM TROY

# Can Cuba Recover?

*The Crime of Cuba.* By Carleton Beals. J. B. Lippincott Company. Thirty-one full-page photographic illustrations. $3.

THE amazing revolution of affairs in Cuba has stirred an interest about the island in the United States more intense than there has been for twenty years. Carleton Beals's colorful work appears as a timely response to prevalent curiosity as to what is back of the headlines. Why did the Cubans fail to love the kindly-seeming (in his photographs) Machado? In this book you may read of the crimes of the vanished regime, recounted bluntly in overpowering but discriminating detail. Beals adheres steadfastly to matters of public concern, barely hinting at the scabrous background of the Machado despotism. Much of the material is of course difficult of verification, in the same sense that it is difficult for our public prosecutors to convict a racketeer. But there is substance and to spare to support the characterization of the late administration as "a sawed-off shotgun government."

It does less than justice to the breadth of this book, however, to present it as a chronicle of atrocities. That chapter in Cuba's sorrowful history has closed since Beals set pen to paper. We may hope that it has closed forever. But governments of thieves and assassins do not spring into being spontaneously in a void. The crimes of Machado form but an episode in the tragic tale of the crime of Cuba. His conduct of public affairs as a private racket was a function of Cuba's social environment, the refinement to a high degree of a set of skills elaborated there long since by Spanish and American and Cuban predecessors. The claim of "The Crime of Cuba" to long-time usefulness lies in the thoroughness with which it explores the Cuban scene and the emphasis which it places upon abiding factors with which the new provisional government (or any government seeking the general good of Cubans) must reckon. There is no work either in Spanish or English that undertakes with such breadth of scope to display the fundamentals of Cuban society. It is based, as the reviewer can testify, upon accurate use of the best sources.

The first part of the book, nearly a fourth, is devoted to analysis and portraiture of culture patterns. Two themes are intertwined. There is first the absence of roots, which we might have been reminded is the characteristic of immigrant civilizations, the result of the selective processes which impeded the transit of either European or African culture as an integral whole to this continent. There is, second, the gulf between Creole culture, represented as upper-class, urban, but retrospective, and mestizo culture, represented as rural, degraded, but vital. Beals steers skilfully around the view that these patterns are racially transmitted, but is impressed by the degree to which growing race consciousness serves as a cultural barrier. He accepts the Fernando Ortiz theory of growing Africanization. He also undertakes, without explaining his method, to revise the Cuban census figures to show a great minority of pure white stock.

This section is a fascinating piece of work, with a style and spirit more characteristic of French than American journalism. The patterns described are there and they are most important, politically as well as socially. My complaint would be that a full perspective demands portrayal also from other points of view. This cultural dichotomy is imperfectly correlated with economic forces. It tends to ignore features common to both patterns. It leaves Beals with an inadequate explanation of the rise of the A. B. C. secret society. It does not account for the Cubanization of Spanish and other immigrants (American, for instance). It leaves the impression, which is misleading, that industrial and commercial *mores*, where found in Cuba, are merely an alien intrusion. Beals's data elsewhere in the book supply evidence to the contrary.

It may be suggested that an alternative approach to the problem of Cuban cultural differences and similarities may be found in an examination of the impact of successive economic systems upon a subtropical frontier. There has been frontier economy itself, never extinguished and now the bulwark of Cuban rural subsistence. There has been the plantation system, which nurtured both Creole and mestizo culture. And there has been modern industrialism. Cuba has, however, never known small-scale competitive capitalism either in the countryside or mill. And it is this which gives a sense of romantic unreality to the political fetishes of nineteenth-century liberalism as applied to Cuba. As Beals reiterates, Cubans do not own their land, and the basis for general participation in the control of enterprise has been a progressively narrowing one.

The central theme of this book is, however, political. It may be best summarized in the author's own words:

> Every government has owed much of its origin to American business interests or to the direct intervention of the United States, or both; and these governments have been maintained in power, legally or illegally, by these same factors constantly operating. The main objective of American capital in Cuba has been to reap the largest profits possible without regard for the welfare of the Cuban people; the main objective of the State Department has been to maintain the status quo, to insure stability often regardless of the wishes of the Cuban people. . . .
>
> "For all the blood and sacrifice of our people, of your people, we merely changed masters. . . . We are exiles in our own land. . . . That is the crime of Cuba."
>
> The Cuban, aware that his country is a protectorate of the United States, that his government functions in a realm of unreality, that the final resort is American banking interests and our State Department, refuses to get profoundly excited about politics. Rightly or wrongly he believes any solution answering basic Cuban needs can meet only failure.

The factors in the Cuban situation here correctly stated have been relatively little affected by the passing of Machado. And at a time when the conduct of American diplomatic and banking policy has led to the utter collapse of Cuban economic society, the near-bankruptcy of every American enterprise in the island, and the unemployment of at least half a million American workers to counterbalance that of as many Cubans who no longer buy American goods, it is opportune for Americans to be reminded of the neglect of their moral responsibilities which has contributed to the result.

Beals goes much farther in his specifications of personal and public responsibility. His book in substance charges Stim-

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son and Guggenheim, Woodin and Percy Rockefeller, Charles E. Mitchell and the Chase National Bank with aiding and abetting for pecuniary ends the Machado despotism. He charges wholesale neglect on the part of our embassy of many supposedly American interests, lest the Cuban government be injured. He charges ambassadorial callousness concerning the life and property of Americans not well connected, lack of vigilance regarding Japanese espionage, connivance in the use of embassy premises as an observation post for the Cuban police, and misstatement of facts on the part of Ambassador Guggenheim in public pronouncements and official reports.

The Guggenheim issue has played a great role in opposition propaganda during the last three years, and in the mind of Mr. Guggenheim himself. It is perhaps a more charitable view to say that he was an incompetent ambassador. The circumstances of the overthrow of the Machado regime are the most eloquent testimony to what American diplomacy could have accomplished at any time during the last three years had it set about it with the skill and objectives of Sumner Welles. Nevertheless it must be pointed out that Welles has had a different Administration at Washington to serve.

Beals's pessimistic view concerning the policy likely to dominate the Roosevelt regime has been happily falsified by events. But what of the future of the economic and political intimacies which underlie the shifting panorama of personalities? Whatever the role of Cuban workers, soldiers, and the A. B. C. in the recent revolution, the support of the United States (calling it a constitutional process) was still a factor. Is it "control" when Guggenheim presses advice which is not taken, and something else when Welles produces "new deal" counsel and is listened to? The realities of Cuban-American relations cannot be escaped by legal correctness. They are there and likely to remain, to the embarrassment of both countries, even though the permanent treaty be modified. Beals, while lamenting the conversion of Cuba into a sugar factory, urges in the interest of American security that we give preferential treatment to Cuban sugar as against Philippine and Hawaiian products. The long lists of interlocking directorates with which Beals occasionally interrupts his narrative are certain to remain a part of the Cuban scene unless and until a Communist revolution sweeps them from the whole American stage. How can these factors be reconciled with a "new deal" that will be of significance for Cuban society? Readers of this book, written before the revolution, will be more impressed with the living death of the Cuban republic than with the resources and remedies that might be applied for recovery.

But there are young men and young women who think otherwise. Societies, like organisms, have hidden reserves that may be rallied in the phenomenon of rebirth. A younger generation of Cuban leaders may yet arouse latent metabolic processes for the recovery of their country. If they are to succeed there is a long time of sacrifice ahead for the comfortable classes. Havana cannot maintain the scale of living that glittered from 1917 to 1927. It is equally true that the United States may aid most effectively by curbing the intrigues of the financial racketeers, who are even less lovely in looting Cuba than in their depredations at home. The beginning of wisdom does not consist in floating a refunding loan in the New York money market. American enterprise has been ruined by its own mistaken greed. It may flourish again in security only if Cubans can find a way to a new orientation of their national life. The magic of "experts" has been tried. Foreign investment has proved a perilous stimulant, like strychnine, a poison in an overdose. Unless the people can be returned to the fertile land, and the land to the people who need it, without too cautious regard for legal and financial niceties, Cuba's future will with difficulty rise above her past.

LELAND HAMILTON JENKS

# The Giants of Wall Street

*The Mirrors of Wall Street.* Anonymous. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.50.

NO time could be more appropriate than the present for a penetrating analysis of the great figures of Wall Street, of the men who have dominated the financial and industrial policies of the nation to the misfortune and bewilderment of the great mass of its citizens. But the glass which the anonymous author of "The Mirrors of Wall Street" has held up before the clay-footed giants of finance is cracked and distorting.

Most of the expected figures are included in the scene—Morgan, Mitchell, Lamont, Otto Kahn, the younger Rockefeller, Baruch, Dillon, Aldrich, Eugene Meyer, and others. Some enter less directly, such as A. H. Wiggin, Owen Young, and Andrew Mellon. There are a few prominent omissions, such as Raskob, the du Ponts, Matthew Brush, and Charles Hayden. There is random information, a considerable fund of gossip, and a great deal of generalization.

The attitude of the present book toward the great financiers is mildly "debunking," a debunking interspersed with a kind of half-praise which fails to reveal any consistent insight into their true motives. The author, for example, is apparently unable to detect the patent opportunism underlying Winthrop Aldrich's blast for banking reform, delivered last February when the Chase Bank was on the brink of an inquisition similar to the one which shook Charles E. Mitchell out of the National City Bank. "Mr. Aldrich has dared to damn the very practices that his neighbors, his legal brethren, and his financial colleagues have grown rich on," the author declares, without questioning the reasons for Aldrich's sudden penchant for reform. "In one statement, Mr. Aldrich has done more to clear the atmosphere than could have been done by any other save Mr. Morgan."

The real fabric of the Wall Street system is only hinted at. In an introductory chapter the author discusses Washington and Wall Street, certainly a ripe opportunity to illustrate the means whereby a numerically small group of men were able to control many of the important functions of government during the twelve long years of the Harding-Coolidge-Hoover regimes. But aside from small gossip about Andrew Mellon and the principal figures on the Federal Reserve Board, all that this chapter contributes to public knowledge on this subject is the self-evident fact that under Wall Street pressure the Federal Reserve Board carried on in the early years of the boom a program of open-market purchases of government securities which supplied much of the credit for the rampant speculation in that period. Moreover, after announcing that "there is nothing mysterious about the causes that underlie today's so-called depression," the author attributes sole responsibility for the depression to this same open-market policy, which, while undoubtedly contributing to the extremity of the boom and hence of the slump, is hardly explanatory of the world-wide breakdown of credit, prices, and trade which has occurred since 1929.

This conclusion is typical of the superficial generalizations which run through the book. In the chapter on J. P. Morgan the author tells of the somewhat romantic scene in August, 1914, when Morgan agreed to take care of Great Britain's financial needs in the war, declares that he is antipathetic to Jews, and praises his impeccable family morals. But the vital significance of Morgan's position to the people of the country, as well as the vast network of power which he exercises through the public utilities, railroads, and businesses of all types under his influence, receives only passing mention and no development worthy of the name.

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At its best the book offers personal details of varying interest and piquancy about men who appear before the people chiefly as names or as symbols for institutions. At its worst it slips into misinterpretations of the most naive character, as when the writer says of Charles E. Mitchell, "But he was above immediate profits. Money meant little to him anyhow." Perhaps the most significant expression of the author's attitude toward the evils of Wall Street occurs in the passage in which he looks back wistfully to the days of the elder Morgan and writes: "A pity 'tis that his span of life was not delayed for a couple of decades. He would have held the lines at Armageddon. His voice like a thunderbolt would have annihilated the so-called bankers . . . before they . . . tricked the nation into bondage."

PETER HELMOOP NOYES

## Brilliant and Tedious

*The Farm.* By Louis Bromfield. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

THE subtitle of Louis Bromfield's new novel could be "the story of four generations of an American family," and there are no other nine or nine hundred words better suited to indicate its unevenness, brilliance, and tedious detail.

The unevenness throughout "The Farm" leaves the reader with the impression of having read two books at the same time. The long stretches of dull prose read as if Bromfield had sat day after day over his writing pad working with gritted teeth to fill in the hundred-year outline or to die in the attempt. The lines and paragraphs of brilliant writing scattered over the 346 pages are something else; the reader is here brought face to face with a writer who moves us as only a few novelists in America have the power to do. If these passages are not the work of a superior talent, then there is no such thing as creative writing.

But the detail—the tedious detail! Perhaps it is the average reader who demands this itemizing in his novels. The popularity of such novels as "The Farm" would point in that direction; but why must the rest of us be choked with minute descriptions of clothes closets and kitchens, wearing apparel and thoughts? Not even the solitary traveler who unsuspectingly stumbles into one of Bromfield's forest clearings can escape until he has been subjected to the embarrassment of being catalogued from beaver hat to union suit.

"The Farm" is one of the better examples of the novel without characters. In this instance, regardless of what can be said for or against the tendency to write about masses of things rather than specimens of humanity, there is little lack of interest on that account. Bromfield's scores of walking characters—which is to say, characters who come and go without adding to or detracting from the story—are too fleeting to make any lasting impression, good or bad or indifferent, on the reader. Rather, we are held and urged on to the next page by the feeling of a seething mass which, we innocently hope, may break open on the following page and reveal men and women real enough to thrust forward a hand to greet us. And strangely enough, when we turn the final page, we discover that we bear no resentment against Bromfield for having told us a story merely about things, without the help of a single outstanding character.

It is to be hoped that Bromfield will institute a more intensive search in his next novel for the source and causes of America's regression. In "The Farm" he touches lightly on the more obvious symptoms of decay and decadence; and so, well and good. But since the future of the novel lies in its willingness or unwillingness to utilize its unique medium of expression, it is to be hoped that novelists like Bromfield will render the form secure by writing intelligently on peculiarly American expressions of morals, religion, and economic relationships.

In the meantime "The Farm" will find a large and ready-made band of readers, not a few of whom will be disappointed because dirt-farming is squeezed out by detailed descriptions of knickknacks. But, as if by chance, the story resembles the script treatment of a Hollywood screen play, and at some future time the disappointment may be assuaged by a faintly familiar version of "The Farm" accompanied by process shots of cows and chickens and fade-ins on the farmer's daughter.

ERSKINE CALDWELL

## "Then I Saw the Congo . . ."

*Congo Solo, Misadventures Two Degrees North.* By Emily Hahn. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.75.

MISS HAHN is a young woman of great courage. Though it is quite true that Africa is no longer "dark," that road-building is an occupation of such importance that entire Congo villages are depopulated in order to furnish labor to construct highways, and that dugout canoes on the river are propelled by outboard motors, it is still no small matter for any person without previous knowledge of the bush country to embark on the venture reported in this book. That Miss Hahn came through safely was due to her adaptability both to new situations and to human personalities.

Beginning with her departure from Europe on a French West African mail boat (third class, which of itself is something of an adventure), she recounts in diary form her arrival at Matadi—where she was almost refused admittance into the Congo Free State because of the paucity of her funds—her trip into the interior, her experiences as unofficial assistant to a friend in charge of a hospital, her adventures with various members of the Belgian administrative staff, and finally her quarrel with her friend and the beginning of her trip out by way of the East Coast. While in the interior she gave hypodermics and even anaesthetized a patient during the amputation of his leg; she went on an elephant hunt; she made pets of a deserted native boy and a number of simians of various types; she assisted at court councils; she bought Paris perfumes at an interior trade center; and always she was bitten by the innumerable insects that plague the European in the African interior.

The book makes no pretense of being anything more than an account of the experiences of its narrator. Here and there certain observations concerning colonial policy appear: "Of course this country isn't like Australia, I said. Here they don't want to kill off the Negro, they want to help him increase, because they need his labor." But not much of this is found: "Well, I must wait a few days before settling the world. I can't decide on everything this Thursday." Certainly, a picture of Belgian colonial administration that is none too flattering is implicit in these pages; but it is no more than implicit, for apart from the interplay of situations involving Miss Hahn, her friend "Den," three or four officials, one or two natives, and the simians, there is little that is explicit in the book.

Yet this is in keeping with the character of the writing, for it is frankly a personal narrative, not a disquisition either on ethnology or political economy. As such, it is readable and entertaining. The tale it tells is obviously a true one, and there is no attempt—for which one gives hearty thanks—to play up the horrors of the jungle or the mystery of the African bush. That it is a significant work is probably not maintained by the author herself. But it does give a picture of a type of existence lived by Europeans in Africa, and it does emphatically suggest the query as to the worth of such existence in terms of any values that can be associated with human living.

MELVILLE J. HERSKOVITS

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# A Dated Liberal

*From Chaos to Control.* By Sir Norman Angell. The Century Company. $2.

PAMPHLETEERING for a quarter of a century against those particular forms of wickedness, such as war and higher tariffs, which are most hateful to liberals and in favor of those manifestations of righteousness, such as peace and good business, so dear to liberals, has elevated Sir Norman Angell to a knighthood and first rank as an international publicist. His latest work has the weakness of his earlier writings and of the contributions of most liberal writers today—namely, a lack of philosophical profundity. This shortcoming is pardonable in men like Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler, Mitchell, and Ivar Kreuger, who succeed, even if only for a short time, in getting things done their way. But when a man who admits that he has never been able to get people to do things his way sets himself up as an expert on what is wrong and how to right it, he ought, at least, to think things through. And that, precisely, is what the outstanding exponents of British and American liberalism fail to do.

The very title of this book raises questions which it ignores or begs. For instance, is there not control in the fortuitous play of innumerable factors maintaining the equilibrium which Sir Norman Angell calls chaos and which some people call life? Is the jungle more chaotic than a conference of experts? Or is the chaos in the Western world between 1929 and 1933, or 1800 and 1933, better or worse than the greater relative degree of order that reigned for centuries in Egypt, China, Babylon, or Peru? And just what is Sir Norman Angell's opposite of the present chaos? It is much easier to visualize the world dream of a Caesar, Napoleon, Mussolini, Hitler, or Lenin than that of Sir Norman Angell, whose values are largely negative—no war and no bad business. Of course he would add to the list the elimination of avoidable unhappiness for the people, but he would fail to define or comprehend what happiness and unhappiness mean. He cannot apprehend the fact that most people find happiness in suffering and dying for a person, a symbol, or an ideal—for king, flag, or the conquest of a mountain peak. He assumes that a normal person must crave easy living, when, as any true scientist in the field of human behavior, or as any experienced parish priest, family physician, or army sergeant knows full well, most men want to live dangerously, at least at certain times. Sir Norman Angell does not preach an adventure of humanitarianism as a substitute for war, or the sublimation to a higher ideal of the sadistic-masochistic drives which normally express themselves in military mass murder and lofty patriotism. His message is that war is bad business, and he is probably unable to appreciate Professor Whitehead's profound observations that "unfortunately life is an offensive against the repetitious mechanism of the universe," and that "a policy of sociological defense is doomed to failure."

The positive objectives of Sir Norman's idealism appear to be a smoothly working international capitalism under which the state and individuals would cooperate in some unexplained way. The results would be fair (what is fair?) and ample (?) profits for traders, happiness (?) for the people, and the reign of peace and liberal righteousness revealed by liberal experts to the educated democracy. And, of course, freedom would ring.

In a chapter on the present deplorable disbelief in economic sanitation we are assured that the experts are as agreed about the fundamentals of economic sanitation as they are about the essentials of public hygiene. (Sir Norman Angell, Frank Vanderlip, and Nicholas Murray Butler agree on tariff reduction and debt cancelation.) Wars, tariffs, and intergovernmental debts are pestilential germs which the people stupidly tolerate because they heed the wicked nationalists and militarists instead of the nice liberal experts. The idea that international trade competition or modern industrial capitalism may be necessarily a self-destroying social pattern is never even seriously entertained.

In answer to the question, "Do we know what we want?" Sir Norman gives a despairing reply. "Democratic control, however real and effective, would avail nothing while the ideals of patriotism still dominated the mind of the people." "The conditions of successful planning" are discussed in terms of cooperation between government and business rather than in terms of a new cultural synthesis. Spiritual or emotional dynamics have no place in the Angell evangel.

A chapter on Where Education Falls Short tells us that "to be educated did not mean to be politically wise"—hence the war of 1914-18, which might have been averted. Our troubles are due to our education having "failed to develop the skill or habit of applying to social problems simple truths inherent or self-evident in the common facts of daily life." We must "develop the skill for seeing the meaning of facts and drawing the socially useful conclusions from them."

To Sir Norman the "meaning" of the "facts" of international trade and the transfer problem is that the war debts should be canceled. To him the American provincial is an economic illiterate for not seeing a truth so obvious. To the American farmer the meaning of the facts of high taxes, large debts which the farmer has to pay, low prices, and the size of the British navy is that England should pay. To him the defaulting foreign government is a welcher. To me the meaning of these "facts" is that Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas were right about usury. Sir Norman is not enough of a thinker to perceive that all debtors have a transfer problem today and that all large classes of debts must stand or fall together.

It is a pitiful liberalism which assumes facts to be objective realities having identical appearances to all educated minds and indicating certain obvious conclusions to all experts alike. The experts reach conclusions about social problems in much the same way as the masses, and every social decision is an expression of preference rather than a selection between truth and error. "From Chaos to Control" is a piece of immature discussion by a dated liberal. It is irrelevant to the world of Stalin, Hitler, or Franklin Roosevelt. Its basic assumptions were never relevant to any situation which existed outside the minds of a few nineteenth-century liberals. The book has no broad human appeal because it strikes no responsive chord in the hearts of the world's unhappy millions who are not looking for a life of controlled ease under experts but for bread and adventure—mainly a great adventure which will give meaning to life.

LAWRENCE DENNIS

# Shorter Notices

*To Be or Not to Be: A Study of Suicide.* By Louis I. Dublin and Bessie Bunzel. Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. $3.50.

The most interesting and original part of this book is the opening section, which consists of a statistical survey of the prevalence and environmental influences of suicide. In this field Mr. Dublin, who is statistician of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, is in his element, and writes with undoubted authority. Many of his statistics, since they are derived from the files of the Metropolitan, are especially valuable. Some of the data only confirm general expectations, but others are rather surprising—for instance, when they establish the fact that suicide is most frequent in the jocund month of May. The race distribution of suicide will also surprise some readers. While

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American Negroes and Italians have a low suicide rate, that of the Germanic races is very high. It is interesting that the Jewish suicide rate, which used to be very low, has increased tremendously in recent decades. The rest of the book is very readable although it offers no new theory of suicide. The story of suicide among primitive peoples and in various civilizations ancient and modern is followed by an exposition of the legal and insurance aspects of suicide. Then the psychology of suicide is examined, with much reliance upon psychoanalytic interpretations. In conclusion Mr. Dublin, as is very natural, since he is in the life-insurance business, engages in a little propaganda for life, but he seems to have missed Samuel Butler's famous observation that suicide is a problem for an embryo, not a man.

*Down and Out in Paris and London.* By George Orwell. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

This interesting and rather painful document has been compared to a "populist" novel like Eugène Dabit's "Hôtel du Nord," and indeed, in its vivid, unforced fashion, it is more absorbing than any novel of that sort, since all experience, honestly set down on paper, is more interesting than experience derived through the sieve of fiction. The author is, or was, an old Eton boy and ex-civil servant who became a dishwasher in Paris and a bum in his own country. His account of these experiences has attracted great attention in England. Several reviewers have dealt with his book in a semi-autobiographic fashion, commenting that it is rather pleasant to be down and out by the Seine, but not so pleasant by the Thames, and so on. This commentator would state, like Mr. Orwell himself, that it is not pleasant to be down and out anywhere. No writer submitting himself for the nonce to a horrible existence, for the sake of material, could possibly convey so powerful a sense of destitution and hopelessness as has Mr. Orwell, on whom these sensations were, apparently, forced. If we are correct in this conclusion, if this book is not merely a piece of "human nature faking," it is a restrained and all the more damning indictment of a society in which such things are possible.

*The Russo-Japanese Treaties of 1907-16 Concerning Manchuria and Mongolia.* By Ernest Batson Price. The Johns Hopkins Press. $1.75.

Never has a scholar more ably dissected the secret of Russo-Japanese treaties than Dr. Price has done in this slim volume. But his analysis is more than an examination of words and phrases written into diplomatic documents, for it lays bare the adroit technique of modern diplomacy. "Special interests" defined in public conventions become "vital interests" in secret treaties, and from there it is but a short leap to the exercise of political sovereignty. The public treaties into which Russia and Japan entered during this period ostensibly promised that both powers would respect the political and territorial integrity of China, but the secret agreements arrived at at the same time were actually arrangements looking definitely toward the further partition of China. All that was necessary was a simple shifting of phraseology. Dr. Price suggests, though with justifiable caution, that the last of the secret treaties, those negotiated in 1916, were in all likelihood directed against the United States. Additional study may reveal, indeed, that even as this country was preparing to enter the World War on the side of Russia and Japan those two countries were forming a military alliance against the United States. Dr. Price's work will prove invaluable to scholars seeking a clearer understanding of the present conflict of interests between the Soviet Union and Japan.

*Charles II.* By John Hayward. Great Lives Series. The Macmillan Company. 75 cents.

Mr. Hayward does his best to vindicate Charles II by humanizing him. But to prove that a throned sensualist and double-dealer was no worse than the average man might be in the same circumstances cannot alter the historical indictment. By the very nature of the situation it is criminal for a man in a position of great responsibility to be a mediocrity; though perhaps not so great a crime as being a successful autocrat, like Charles's more brilliant contemporary, Louis XIV. Mr. Hayward's book would have been cleaner without the patches of humanizing whitewash, but it is very readable.

*Beethoven.* By Alan Pryce Jones. Great Lives Series. The Macmillan Company. 75 cents.

Beethoven was so much the creature of music—which, of all arts perhaps, derives most from the subconscious—that his conscious life resembles a blundering and only partial awakening out of the subconscious. Impulse dominated his actions, and he showed incredible stupidity and insensitiveness in his relations with his intimates. As a consequence his life, racked additionally by his physical torments, was a sad one. Mr. Jones presents it in fluent narrative, but his estimate of the value of Beethoven's music is too extreme to be just. It is true that the art of a past period can only exert a part of its potentialities in the present, but that is because in any period men can find use only for a portion of what is given them, even of contemporary achievement.

*Wagner.* By W. J. Turner. Great Lives Series. The Macmillan Company. 75 cents.

This is one of the most interesting of the eighteen volumes thus far brought out in this series. Within its brief compass it contrives to give a well-rounded, even detailed impression of the personality of Wagner, one of the most successful men who ever lived, and a penetrating assessment of Wagner's place in the history of music. Now that his career can be seen in perspective, Wagner appears a monstrosity of brilliant egotism. Rarely in history has one man been able to use others so cleverly for his own ends, and coat the act with such a convincing whitewash of idealistic sentiment. Mr. Turner's judgment upon Wagner's music is probably too harsh; but it is evident already that its one-time "profundities" are pretentious and deceiving.

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*Joshua Reynolds.* By John Steegman. Great Lives Series. The Macmillan Company. 75 cents.

Reynolds's life was one of the most fortunate in history. He was happy, healthy, distinguished, popular, rich, and long-lived. His satisfactions were so many that he never required or missed the consolation of a woman's love. He was fortunate even to the point of having Gainsborough, his younger and only serious rival, die before him, leaving him undisturbed in the pleasing consciousness of being indisputably the greatest living painter in England. Mr. Steegman tells his story entertainingly but a little too worshipfully; and the portrait lacks what Reynolds's own portraits often lacked, sufficient social background.

*The Brontës.* By Irene Cooper Willis. Great Lives Series. The Macmillan Company. 75 cents.

It is not often that the circumstances that beget authorship are so plain as in the case of the Brontës. Charlotte, Emily, Anne, and their brother Branwell grew up in a depressingly lonely household, early left motherless and dominated by a discouraged, eccentric, and hypochondriac father. The false laws of gentility barred them from friendships; the companionship of books was all that was available to them; their chief play as a consequence was literary. As adults they met life shut up in shells. Branwell, broken by a disappointment in love and a failure as a painter (there was a compulsion on the Brontës to practice one or another of the arts), became a drunkard and drug addict and died young. Emily and Anne also died young; Charlotte outlived them but died in her first pregnancy. Even the pleasure of literary recognition was enjoyed only by Charlotte. Mis Willis tells their touching story interestingly and sensitively, but wastes a good deal of her small space at the beginning by a pointlessly detailed description of the Brontë house at Haworth.

*Yonder Lies Jericho.* By Samuel B. Harrison. D. Appleton-Century Company. $2.

"Yonder Lies Jericho" is the success story of Aaron Burrell, born Aaron Berele Hochstein, who comes as a penniless immigrant to the Texas of 1865, and eventually founds a merchant dynasty in the Southwest. Although there is an interesting background to the story of Aaron's rise—the cattle drives, the oil booms, the first coming of the railroads—Aaron himself is a generalized figure, with all the stock emotions of the Jewish business man of popular tradition. The dialect in which he speaks, diluted Milt Gross, is unfortunately chosen, and lends a burlesque touch to the melodramatic crises of his life. One feels that this novel, dealing with phases of Southern expansion and with Jewish life in the South, is an attempt to conform to two current literary vogues; but that the material has not been integrated into a convincing whole by the author.

*Original Design.* By Eardley Beswick. Minton, Balch and Company. $2.50.

The original design in question is conceived by an earnest young chap who is a draftsman in the factory which provides an authentic setting for this English novel. Although crafty people in the works manage to steal credit for his invention, it still saves the business from catastrophe after roughly 350 pages of one thing and another—seductions, a suicide, a ball game. The inventor's troubles tie fairly plausibly into the story of an industrial depression; but while all this commands interest of a sort, it is not exactly stimulating, nor does it pretend to have much bite as regards the social scene.

*Ballads and Sea Songs of Newfoundland.* Collected and edited by Elisabeth Bristol Greenleaf. Music recorded in the field by Grace Yarrow Mansfield and the editor. Harvard University Press. $5.

Ten years ago, when teaching one summer in a school of Dr. Wilfred Grenfell's Mission on the west coast of northern Newfoundland, the editor of this sizable volume found herself in a region where old ballads were still the songs of the day. She collected the words and music of all the songs she could coax forth in that and the following summer. Then she dropped the project for a time, but in 1929, with assistance from Vassar College, she returned to Newfoundland with Grace Yarrow Mansfield, a trained musician, and finished the collection of the material which has gone into this book. Many of the ballads, of course, are old favorites from the British Isles, especially England and Ireland, although often with local variations. Some were composed in Newfoundland, usually on English or Irish models. A lesser number are American, Canadian, or French songs. The book has been produced with both enthusiasm and care. A large number of songs have been assembled, with footnotes on their origin, so far as traced, and on their appearance in other collections, when found. The result is a genuine contribution to the folklore of this continent.

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## Contributors to This Issue

PAUL BLANSHARD, executive director of the City Affairs Committee of New York, has just returned from a visit to Spain.

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